

September 29, 2020

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS  
City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to: (1) construct a new two-story residential building consisting of two Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), each 800 square feet in size, in the front of the lot; (2) convert an existing garage and accessory recreation room into an 800-square-foot Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in an existing rear two-story structure; and (3) construct a new 478-square-foot, two-car garage attached to the existing rear structure on a lot located at 2721 E. 3rd Street. The existing two-story residential structure located at the rear of the site is a contributing structure within the Bluff Heights Historic District. (District 2)

APPLICANT: Mohan Singhal  
1166 E. 23rd St,  
Signal Hill, CA 90755  
(Application No. COAC2007-03)

**THE REQUEST**

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new two-story structure at the front of the lot, retain the existing two-story rear structure and construct a new two-car garage that will be attached to the existing structure. Currently, the front of the lot is vacant and the only structure on the lot is the contributing building located in the rear portion of the lot. Ultimately, the proposed project will result in three new Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and a total of five dwelling units on the subject site.

**BACKGROUND**

The subject property is located on the north side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, between Molino and Colorado Avenues (Exhibit A - Location Map), within the R-2-A zone (Two-Family Residential, Standard Lot). The subject lot is 4,542-square-foot lot and is developed with a 1,972 square foot, two-story residential structure built in 1923. The existing rear structure currently houses two primary dwelling units on the upper level and garage and accessory space on the ground floor. The proposed project would convert the ground floor of the structure into an 800-square-foot ADU and 168-square-foot storage room and retain the two existing, upper-level units. A new two-car garage will be attached to the building and a new two-story structure housing two additional ADUs would be constructed at the front of the lot. The new 478-square foot will be constructed

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The existing structure is located 55 feet from the front property line, four feet from the (west) side yard property line, 23 feet-11 inches from the (east) side yard and four feet from the rear property line. The 79-foot long driveway is located along the east side of the lot. The structure originally had the address of 307 Colorado Place; the address was later changed to 2721 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

307

3rd Street

Colorado Place

Original Address	Development	New Address
301 Colorado Place	4-Unit Apartment	2733-2739 E. 3rd Street
303 Colorado Place	4-Unit Apartment	2725-2731 E. 3rd Street
305 Colorado Place	3-Unit Apartment	301, 303, 305 Colorado Place
307 Colorado Place	2-Unit Apartment	2721 E. 3rd Street (Subject Property)

The subject property and new address is highlighted on the aerial map below.



For purposes of site context, the three adjacent apartment buildings (2725-2731 and 2733-2739 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 301-305 Colorado Place), located on what was formally the same site, are simple, unadorned rectangular buildings that exhibit influences of the Spanish Colonial architectural style. All three buildings feature stucco clad walls, decorative parapet walls highlighted with clay tiles and wood windows. By contrast, the structure on the subject reconfigured lot exhibits some elements of the Victorian architectural style, as evidenced by the horizontal shiplap wood siding, single hung wood windows and a flat roof (Exhibit B – Photographs), but is otherwise nondescript and was likely designated as a contributing structure to the Bluff Heights Historic District due to the age of the structure rather than its architectural significance. Historically, accessory buildings such as garages were not constructed using the same decorative finish materials as primary structures. For this reason, it is believed that this building was constructed as accessory garages to the three apartment buildings to the east.

## **ANALYSIS**

The proposed project requires approval of the CHC because the proposed new two-story building will be located in the front of the lot and both this structure and the proposed new garage visible from the street (Exhibit C - Plans). 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. Under State law, ADUs are generally allowed by-right on residential lots, subject to compliance with unit size requirements and other ADU development standards. ADUs are most typically proposed on single family residential lots, which are permitted to have one ADU, and, under certain circumstances, an additional Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU), while regulations that apply to multifamily lots may permit multiple ADUs. The subject lot is a multifamily zoned lot developed with two primary dwellings, and, as such, the multifamily

provisions of the State ADU laws are applicable to the subject site. As with all projects involving ADUs, 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.

### Existing Structure

Built in 1923, the two-story residential structure is rectangular in shape and measures 44 feet in length, 22 feet in width and 20-feet four-inches in height. The building features horizontal wood shiplap siding and a flat roof. Exterior stairs located on the east elevation lead to a small balcony on the second floor which provides access to the two residential units. No decorative features are found on the building other than the small balcony.

Many of the windows on the building have been replaced with inappropriate materials. The front elevation features one centered, single-hung window on the ground floor elevation and two single-hung windows on the second-floor elevation. The west elevation features one window opening (which is boarded up) on the ground floor and six windows on the second floor. The east elevation features one window, one entry door on the ground floor and three single car garage doors and two sets of side-by-side single hung windows and two doors are located on the second-floor elevation. The rear elevation features three windows on the ground floor and two windows on the second floor.

To accommodate the conversion of garage and accessory area to an ADU, several changes are proposed to the existing two-story primary residential structure, specifically to the ground floor elevations. Several windows will be removed, and the openings will be sealed. New windows and doors will be installed in new openings and the garage doors will be removed and the openings will be closed entirely. Staff is not supportive of the excessive window and door modifications proposed to the ground floor exterior and is proposing a condition that require elimination of the new door openings leading to the bedrooms and reducing the number of doors to only one door leading to the storage room on the west elevation. The main entrance to the new ground floor unit will be from an existing door accessed from the east elevation that will remain. The three ground floor windows on the rear elevation are proposed to be filled in with glass blocks to comply with Building and Safety fire codes. Staff is not supportive of this new material and is proposing a condition to either keep the original windows or remove them entirely and close the opening, if required by building codes.

No changes are proposed to the second-floor exterior windows. However, several windows on the second floor have been replaced with inappropriate material. A condition of this approval has been added to require these windows to be replaced with wood windows. The structure is currently painted a cream (off-white) color.

### New Garage

The new garage will be attached to the east elevation of the existing two-story residential structure. The new garage will be setback one foot from the rear property line and will be

located on the east (side) property line. The new garage will measure 23 feet 11 inches in width, 20 feet in depth and will be 13 feet 3 inches in height.

The new garage was designed to match the existing primary building materials and finishes with similar six-inch wide horizontal wood siding. A 12-inch wide wood trim will visually separate the wood siding from the four-foot six-inch tall parapet wall of the garage and two eight-foot-wide single car garage doors will be installed on the new garage.

In order to ensure compatibility between the existing building and the new garage with the Secretary of Interior Standards and the Bluff Heights Historic District Design Guidelines, the owner will be required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness to paint the existing two story residence and new two-car garage in matching colors that are appropriate for the architectural style, prior to issuance of final Certificate of Occupancy for the ADU and new garage.

### New Residential Structure

The new 1,600 square foot residential building will consist of two 800-square foot ADUs; one on the ground floor and one located on the second floor. The new building measures 25-feet wide, 32 feet long and is 24-feet 1-inch in height. The new two-story building will be located fifteen (15) feet from the front property line, four-feet from the west property line, and 13-feet from the east property line. The new building will maintain an 8-foot separation from the existing residential structure and a new exterior staircase would maintain a 4-foot separation.

The new building is designed with elements and details characteristic of the Craftsman architectural style. Although the architectural style of the proposed building is not the same as the primary building on site, the architectural features and detailing are consistent with the architecture of buildings constructed in the district's period of significance and commonly found throughout the district. The new building features a front facing gable roof system, horizontal wood siding and double hung sash wood windows. The front elevation features a 16-foot 10-inch wide porch with a matching front facing gable roof system. The porch system is offset and features two square columns. The columns will feature a stucco finished base with wood post.

As stated above, the new building will be setback 15-feet from the front property line as required by code. The new porch will be setback 10-foot from the front property line as permitted by the zoning district. The proposed 10-foot front yard setback of new building is consistent with the with variable setbacks of the adjacent properties. The single-family residence to the west is setback 11'-6" and the two-story apartment building to the east is setback 5'-0" from the front property line.

The proposed windows for the new building include hung and fixed wood windows. The front elevation would feature two hung windows which flank a fixed window, one single hung window and two sets of side-by-side hung windows on the second floor. The side and rear elevations feature single hung windows in a variety of sizes.

The new building will be painted in a muted, earth tone muted to complement the Craftsman architecture style. The building will be painted a sage green body (Dill Weed), brown fascia board and beams (Middlebury Brown), dark green window trims (Caldwell Green) and reddish-brown window and door trims (Burnt Russet). The roof will feature brown tone composite shingles (Timberline Amber Wheat).

### Compatibility

The Design Guidelines for the Bluff Heights Historic District provide guidance for new ADUs and new accessory buildings, such as garages. The ordinance states that ADUs must meet the design guidelines for accessory buildings. The guidelines further state that ADUs should not be taller than the existing structure and should be architecturally compatible with the historic building design. The project will maintain an appropriate scale with the context of the Bluff Heights Historic District and context of the block, which consists of a mix of one-story and two-story contributing and non-contributing structures. The abutting property to the west is developed with a one-story single-family residence. The abutting property to the east is developed with a two-story, multi-family apartment building. To the south across 3<sup>rd</sup> Street are two, 12-unit apartment buildings built in 1961 and 1963. Therefore, within the context of the properties abutting the site and across Bluff Heights, there are two-story contributing structures and infill examples in the vicinity of the subject property. As proposed, the scale and size of the proposed new two-story building featuring two ADU's and the new two car garage is compatible with and does not detract from neighborhood.

The new two-story building is located directly in front of the existing contributing structure and the two-car garage is located on the east side of the existing primary structure. The primary residential structure is listed as a contributing resource to the district, likely due to age and not its architectural significance. The structure is believed to have been built as an accessory structure to the three, two-story residential apartments to the east due to its location on the property and its utilitarian finishes. The proposed new two-story structure would be visible from the public right-of-way, but it features a design and height that is compatible with the character established for the historic property and the context of the surrounding properties.

The proposed new building has been designed with Craftsman style details which is substantially different from the architectural style of the existing building. 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..." and the standards also state that improvements should not give a false sense of the property's historical development. Standard No. 10 states that "New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired." The new building maintains simple design elements of the Craftsman style to complement the district, but it does not replicate true period Craftsman style buildings found in the district. The new building has been specifically designed to differentiate it from the original structure and as it is detached from the primary residence it does not degrade the integrity of the primary residence. While the new garage structure is attached to the existing

structure as proposed, the addition of the garage will not remove or obscure any historically significant or otherwise prominent building features, given that, as noted throughout the staff report, the building is a simple utilitarian building with little adornment.

The proposed new two-story building featuring two ADUs and the new two-car garage will be consistent and in full compliance with the City's residential development standards for the R-2-A (Two-Family Residential, Standard Lot) zoning district, the Bluff Heights Historic District Ordinance C-7937, and the Craftsman Style Guide. The proposed two-story building consisting of two ADUs and the new two-car garage will be compatible in massing and size with yet distinguishable from the original building

### **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 Heights Historic District Ordinance. With conditions, Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness to: (1) construct a new two-story residential building consisting of two Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), each 800 square feet in size, in the front of the lot; (2) convert an existing garage and accessory recreation room into an 800-square-foot Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in an existing rear two-story structure; and (3) construct a new 478-square-foot, two-car garage attached to the existing rear structure on a lot located at 2721 E. 3rd Street. All the findings can be made in the affirmative for the proposed improvements, as these improvements are compatible in overall scale, massing, proportion and materials 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 D – 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 Categorical 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**

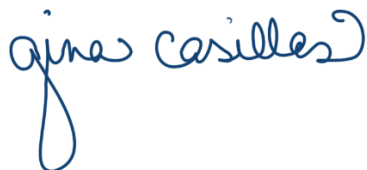
Public notices were distributed on September 9, 2020. As of this date, three letters of support were received in response to this project. (Exhibit E – Public Comment).

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Respectfully submitted,



GINA CASILLAS  
PROJECT PLANNER



ALEJANDRO PLASCENCIA  
PRESERVATION PLANNER



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



PATRICIA A. DIEFENDERFER, AICP  
ADVANCE PLANNING OFFICER

CK:PAD:AP:gc

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