

November 24, 2020

**CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS**

City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

A Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing detached garage and construct a new detached 451-square-foot, two-car garage with an attached 133-square-foot storage room on a lot with a contributing structure located at 3728 California Avenue in the California Heights Historic District. (District 7)

**APPLICANT:** Luis Arredondo  
1950 Pacific Avenue  
Long Beach, CA 90806  
(Application No. COAC2008-01)

**THE REQUEST**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the existing garage and construct a new detached structure consisting of a 451-square-foot, two-car garage and a 133-square-foot storage room, totaling 584 square feet. The new two-car garage will be rebuilt in the same location as the original garage and will remain detached from the principal structure. Vehicular access will continue to be taken from the alley.

**BACKGROUND**

The subject property is located on the east side of California Avenue, between 37<sup>th</sup> Street and Bixby Road (Exhibit A - Location Map) within the R-1-N zoning district (Single Family Residential District with Standard Lots). Currently, the property is developed with a single-family residence and a detached 299-square-foot two-car garage, both built in 1929.

The project site is located on a 3,187-square-foot lot measuring 25 feet in width by 127.5 feet in depth. The primary structure on the site is a one-story, 929 square-foot single-family residence that is built in the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style. A detached garage is located at the rear of the lot. The single-story house exhibits characteristics of the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style such as a stucco exterior, a large arched fixed wood window in the front of the house, wood windows throughout the structure, red clay roof tiles, and a flat roof. The structure is centered on the 25-foot wide lot and is a contributing structure in the California Heights Historic District.



The existing detached garage was constructed with Spanish Colonial Revival architectural features similar to those found on the principal structure, such as stucco exterior and a flat roof. The garage is located approximately 20 feet from the rear property line, approximately 19 feet from the house and takes vehicular access from the alley. A covered patio is attached to the side of the garage. (Exhibit B – Photographs).

Castillo Engineering Inc. performed a limited Structural Investigation on September 28, 2020 and found numerous structural problems on the existing garage (Exhibit C - Garage Inspection Report). According to the report, the garage floor (concrete slab) appears to be missing reinforcing steel and has large cracks. The garage foundation footing is missing below the exterior walls and the exterior walls which sit directly on the garage floor have sustained water and termite damage. The exterior stucco also is cracked in multiple locations and large cracks are visible throughout. As a result of the above-described conditions, the applicant proposes to demolish the existing garage entirely.

## **ANALYSIS**

The applicant is requesting to demolish the existing garage and covered patio to construct a new 451-square-foot, two-car garage with an attached 133-square-foot storage room. The proposed project requires approval of the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) because the proposed new construction exceeds 250 square feet. To be granted approval, the project must comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards and meet the findings for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Staff reviewed the photos submitted with the garage inspection report and concluded that the garage is severely deteriorated. The demolition of the garage will not modify the front-facing elevation of the property as the existing garage sits behind the primary structure and is not visible from California Avenue. As the garage is only accessible from the alley no driveway exists from California Avenue. No improvements are proposed on the single-family residence or to the property frontage.

The new structure has been designed to match the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style of the home. The new garage structure will be located in the approximate location of the original garage. More specifically, the new structure (garage and storage room) will be located approximately 20 feet from the house and will be setback 10-feet from the rear property line, three feet from the (south) side property line and will provide a zero setback along the (north) side property line. The new garage will measure 22 feet in width by 20-feet 6-inches in depth. The storage room will be attached to the garage and will measure 19-feet in width and 7-feet in depth. The proposed garage structure meets the setback requirements and other applicable development standards for accessory structures. The location of the garage, set back 10-feet from the rear property line adjacent to the alley, will result in a 25-foot vehicular back up which exceeds the minimum 24-foot requirement. The garage will retain the vehicular access from the 15-foot wide alley at the rear.

The proposed structure is designed to match the materials and other features of the existing single-story residence. It will feature a smooth stucco exterior and a flat roof system with a two-foot tall parapet wall. The garage structure is a standard two-car size and is proposed height of 12-feet 3-inches. The east (rear) elevation, which faces the alley, will feature a 16-foot wide door that feature four raised panels. The (south) side elevation will feature two doors and the west elevation will feature one double hung sash window and one door. (Exhibit D – Plans).

#### Compatibility with Neighborhood

The proposed structure has been designed to match the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style of the principal, contributing structure. The proposed garage structure has been carefully designed with regards to the narrow, 25'-0" wide lot. The proposed garage is 12-feet three-inches in height and the existing home is approximately 13-feet in height. As such, the new garage is located behind the principal building, at the rear of the lot, and will not be visible from California Avenue. The proposed structure's massing is consistent with that of the principal structure on the site, in accordance with the Spanish Colonial Revival Style Guide. In order to ensure compatibility with the existing structure, the Secretary of Interior Standards and the California Heights Historic District Design Guidelines, the owner will be required to install wood doors and windows on the garage and to paint the new garage structure to match the primary structure prior to issuance of final Certificate of Occupancy.

In conclusion, the proposed structure is compatible with the existing residence's Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style and is designed both to be compatible with and differentiated from the original development on the site. In accordance with Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation Standard No. 9, which states that "new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features...", the new garage structure has been designed to complement and match the architectural style of the main dwelling but is modest in size and minimal design features to differentiate the project from the original main dwelling.

The proposed garage structure will be consistent and in full compliance with the City's residential development standards for the R-1-N (Single Family Residential District with Standard Lots), the California Heights Historic District Ordinance (C-7702), the California Heights Historic District Design Guidelines, and the Spanish Colonial Revival Style Guide. The proposed garage structure is located in the rear half of the property and will be compatible in massing and size and will be 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 Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings and the California Heights Historic District Ordinance (Exhibit E – Findings). Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, subject to the conditions of approval (Exhibit F – Conditions of Approval),

to construct a new 451-square-foot, two-car garage with an attached 133-square-foot storage room. 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 to the architectural style of the existing contributing structure on the property and with the context of the District.

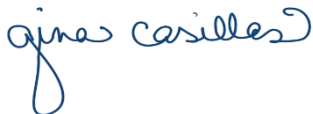
### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

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 November 6, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,



GINA CASILLAS  
PROJECT PLANNER



ALEJANDRO PLASCENCIA  
PRESERVATION PLANNER



PATRICIA A. DIEFENDERFER, AICP  
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER

PAD:AP:GC:PS

Attachments:   Exhibit A – Location Map  
                      Exhibit B – Photographs  
                      Exhibit C – Garage Inspection Report  
                      Exhibit D – Plans  
                      Exhibit E – Findings  
                      Exhibit F – Conditions of Approval