

February 23, 2021

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS  
City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new three-story single-family residence (1,804 square feet) with an attached one-car garage on a vacant, narrow lot located at 607 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street in the Downtown Plan (PD-30 - Neighborhood Overlay) Area within the Drake Park/Willmore City Historic District. (District 1)

APPLICANT: Sararee Jirattikanchote  
153 E. City Place Drive  
Santa Ana, CA 92705  
(Application No. COAC1901-03)

**THE REQUEST**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new three-story, 1,804-square-foot single-family residence at a vacant lot in the Drake Park/Willmore City Historic District. 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 the north side of West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, between Daisy Avenue to the east and Maine Avenue to the west (Exhibit A - Vicinity Map), within the Downtown Plan (PD-30) Neighborhood Overlay. The subject 1,307-square-foot lot is presently vacant land. The dimensions of the lot 25-feet (width) by 52.3-feet (depth) represents a narrow and shallow lot, as defined in the Long Beach Zoning Code. The site is void of existing structures and is enclosed by a chain-link fence (Exhibit B - Site Photographs). The site is located in the southwestern portion of the Drake Park/Willmore City Historic District (Exhibit C - Surrounding Structures).

**ANALYSIS**

The proposed project requires approval of the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) because the new dwelling constitutes infill construction and exceeds 250 square-feet. The new single-family residence would be visible from the public right-of-way (West 4<sup>th</sup> Street). 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 three-story dwelling would be 1,804-square-feet in size and feature a one car garage and front porch at the first floor (Exhibit D - Plans). The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors feature front facing recessed deck areas. The proposed residence will be set back 10 feet from the front property line on West 4<sup>th</sup> Street with a 20-foot-long driveway to the attached one-car garage. Along the side of the structure, the new building will be set back 3 feet from the east and west property lines. A 5-foot setback would be maintained at the rear. As proposed, the project requires and is contingent upon Site Plan Review Committee approval for reduced setbacks along the east and west property lines (side yards) of the 3 feet in lieu of the 5 feet required; the PD-30 (Downtown Plan) authorizes the committee to grant setback reductions to allow for more context sensitive setbacks.

The new roof would feature a front-gabled roof with a 6:12 roof pitch and feature a cross gable at the center. The roof material would be composition shingles similar to the predominant roof style and materials established for the Craftsman architectural style. The height of the new residence is 32 feet to the ridge for the overall building height. The maximum height in this portion of the PD-30 Neighborhood Overlay is 38 feet. As a condition of approval, the overall height of the roof of the proposed dwelling shall be lowered to the greatest extent feasible, subject to all building and safety requirements (Exhibit E - Conditions of Approval). The pitch of the gable shall be reviewed and approved by Planning Bureau staff prior to the issuance of a building permit.

The architectural period of significance of the District dates back to 1886. Within the District boundaries, there are intact examples of a variety of architectural styles, including Craftsman, Victorian, Mission, Prairie, Italian Renaissance, and Spanish Colonial Revival structures. The new residence is a modern interpretation of the Craftsman style, which is an architectural style found within the Historic District. The new structure incorporates several architectural features of the Craftsman style that integrate the proposed structure with the overall 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 all elevations, hung windows, gabled roof, and column porch elements. A condition of approval has been included to ensure the rear bathroom windows are converted to appropriate awning windows instead of horizontal slider windows. In a modern interpretation of the Craftsman style, the residence will feature a front entry with a minor overhang projection to form a small porch with tapered columns. As described above, the roof is designed with a front-facing gable and a cross gable at the midpoint. The front elevation of the third floor would be recessed from the front elevation. This design would be generally consistent with the Craftsman Design Guidelines, while not representing a false sense of history. The building is infill construction and would not remove historic building components.

While the subject property is not a contributing property within the Drake Park/Willmore City Historic District, the District ordinance includes general guidance for new construction and requires compliance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. This design would be consistent with the Historic District ordinance guidance for new construction (Exhibit F - Findings).

Most of the proposed windows for the new residence are hung windows. Front-facing windows include tripartite windows compatible with the Craftsman Design Guidelines. The front door would feature a single door with a sidelight window. Where windows are not egress windows for building code compliance, windows will be assessed at plan check to ensure privacy is maintained. All proposed windows would be of quality wood or wood-clad materials and have wood trim to be consistent with the Craftsman 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.

Site improvements are proposed as part of the construction of the new dwelling, which includes landscaping, paving, and perimeter fencing (side and rear). The front and rear yards will be landscaped. The front yard will include grass and planter areas along the frontage and walkway leading to the entry. As conditioned, the entry walkway and driveway will be poured Portland cement concrete. A condition of approval has been added to ensure the existing chain-link fencing would be removed and new historically appropriate side and rear yard fencing is installed.

In order to ensure compatibility with the Craftsman Style design guidelines, the owner will be required to provide samples of exterior paint colors to be reviewed by staff, prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the proposed structure. The structure will be required to be painted in appropriate colors prior to issuance of final Certificate of Occupancy for the new residence.

Buildings in the Drake Park Willmore City Historic district are of varying heights and generally are built closer to the front property line than existing zoning regulations would allow, given that the area was largely developed prior to current zoning regulations. The required front yard setback and garage setback for the proposed project would be consistent with current zoning requirements, which would be larger than the abutting structures. As it relates to height, buildings in the area vary in scale. There are Victorian style buildings with high roof pitches, historic multi-family apartment buildings, and infill apartment buildings with multiple floors, which have been developed over time in the district. While the majority of contributing properties in the Historic District are one or two stories in height, there are three-story structures in the vicinity and in the district as a whole. Therefore, the introduction of a new three-story structure would be differentiated from the surrounding contributing structures, but would not be out of character for the district as a whole. The Drake Park/Willmore City Historic District contains noncontributing infill structures that exceed the two-story height.

The Downtown Plan (PD-30) includes zoning regulations to encourage multi-family and mixed-use development. The Neighborhood Overlay is established to ensure that primarily residential uses are maintained and commercial uses compatible with small-scale neighborhoods are appropriately permitted and regulated within specific residential areas. The addition of a primary residential unit to the property would be generally consistent with the varied single- and multi-family residential development pattern of this portion of the historic district in the downtown PD-30 area. The project will maintain an appropriate scale with the context of the Historic District and context of the block which consists of a mix of one-story and two-story

structures and infill development. The overall height of the new residence is 32-feet measured to the top of the ridge. The similarity in roof height with the existing two-story pitched structures provides visual compatibility in the vicinity of the project site. Similarly, the variation of the front elevation provides visual relief to break up the massing.

The proposed Craftsman style structure is complementary to the District but 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 dwelling is a modern interpretation of the Craftsman style and has been designed to complement the context of the District, but has also been designed with features such as a front-facing decks and cantilever areas that differentiate the project from the traditional Craftsman style.

The property is vacant and any new construction on the site will be visible from West 4<sup>th</sup> Street. As designed, the proposed three-story residence will be compatible with the context of the district. The proposed residence will be consistent and in compliance with the City's development standards for the Downtown Plan (PD-30) Neighborhood Overlay, the Drake Park/Willmore City Historic District Ordinance C-7538, and the Craftsman Style Guide.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff has analyzed the proposed project and has determined that the project meets the requirements set forth in the Downtown Plan (PD-30), 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 Drake Park/Willmore City Historic District Ordinance. With conditions, Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a new three-story, 1,804-square-foot single-family residence. All the findings can be made in the affirmative for the proposed improvements, as with conditions, the proposed improvements are compatible in overall scale, massing, proportions, and materials with the context of the District. Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, subject to the 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**

On February 16, 2021, 2193 public notices were distributed. As of this date, no letters were received in response to this project.

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

FEBRUARY 23, 2021

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Respectfully submitted,



MARYANNE CRONIN  
PROJECT PLANNER



ALEJANDRO PLASCENCIA  
PRESERVATION PLANNER



PATRICIA A. DIEFENDERFER, AICP  
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER

PAD:AP:mc

Attachments: Exhibit A - Vicinity Map  
Exhibit B - Photographs  
Exhibit C - Surrounding Structures Exhibit  
Exhibit D - Plans  
Exhibit E - Conditions of Approval  
Exhibit F - Findings