

September 28, 2021

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing non-contributing garage located at the rear of the property and construct a new detached two-story structure, consisting of a 986-square-foot, four-car garage with storage and laundry area, a 998-square-foot Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) located on the second floor and a 624-square-foot roof deck. The property is located at 3215 E. Ocean Boulevard, and the existing primary residence situated on the front half of the lot is a contributing structure to the Bluff Park Historic District. (District 3)

APPLICANT: Steven Sennikoff
5500 E. 2nd Street, Suite 2
Long Beach, CA 90803
(Application No. COAC2010-01)

THE REQUEST

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing non-contributing garage located at the rear of the property and to construct a new detached two-story structure, consisting of a 986-square-foot, four-car garage with storage area, a 998-square-foot Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) located on the second floor and a 624-square-foot roof deck.

BACKGROUND

This project was first agendized for the May 25, 2021 Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) hearing. At the request of the applicant, the project was continued to a date uncertain to make modifications to the project to bring it into compliance with applicable zoning regulations. The proposal has since been modified to ensure compliance and is now being brought forward for the CHC's consideration as an Accessory Dwelling Unity (ADU) proposal rather than as a second unit. Given that the hearing had been continued to a date uncertain, it has been re-noticed in accordance with the requirements of the Zoning Code.

The subject property is located on the north side of Ocean Boulevard, between Paloma and Coronado Avenues. (Attachment A - Vicinity Map), within the R-2-L zone (Single Family Residential, Large Lots). The subject lot is 11,000 square feet in area (55 feet wide by 200 feet



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deep). It is developed with a 3,264-square-foot, two-story single-family house located at the front of the property, which is a contributing structure to the Bluff Park Historic District, and a detached (10 feet by 48 feet) 480-square-foot non-contributing garage located along the rear of the property. The existing primary residence fronts on Ocean Boulevard, is set back approximately 15 feet, 0 inches from the front property line and is located approximately 119 feet 10 inches from the detached garage. A tennis court is located between the existing residence and the existing detached garage. Based on building permits, the house was constructed between 1922 and 1924 and the garage structure was constructed in 1978.

The existing two-story residence was constructed in the Neo-Georgian architectural style. The home is square in shape and features a hip roof system with green colored roof tiles and red colored brick veneer exterior cladding. The structure features a symmetrical front elevation, with a centered porch, flanked by two large picture windows and five evenly spaced, single hung wood sash windows on the second floor above. The house retains all of the original wood windows. No changes are proposed to the house.

The existing garage structure abuts the rear property line adjacent to a 20-foot-wide alley (Bronce Way). The garage structure measures 10 feet deep by 48 feet wide. The 1978 building permit for the structure identified it as a garage, however due to the insufficient size to park a vehicle of today's size, it has been used for storage by the property owner. The structure's exterior features vertical mounted wood plank siding, a 16-foot-wide garage door and a roof deck. (Attachment B – Photographs).

Under the initial project presented to the Commission in May, the applicant requested approval of a new second dwelling unit located above a new four car garage, as is permitted in the R-2-L zone. The project design was deemed appropriate with conditions per the staff recommendation in May, however there remained a question of how the applicant would meet the development standards applicable to new second dwelling units. At the hearing, the applicant requested that the item be continued to address the inconsistencies with the Zoning Code. The previous project, as designed, did not comply with the Zoning Code provision that limits non-permeable paving to not more than 30% of the onsite area that is not covered by structures and driveway. An existing on-site tennis court, which the applicant wished to retain, contributed to the high percentage of non-permeable coverage on the lot that was inconsistent with the code requirements

Under this updated proposal now before the Commission for review, the design elements of the project remain largely unchanged. However, the applicant is now proposing to construct an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in lieu of the second dwelling unit. An ADU differs from a second dwelling unit in that the ADU is considered accessory to the primary unit. Under State law, the ADU is not required to meet the same development standards that a new second dwelling unit would have to meet, including lot coverage, FAR, open space, landscaping and parking. The revised plan differs slightly in terms of the project proposal in that it illustrates a slight reduction of living area for the proposed ADU compared to what was proposed for a second dwelling unit. Additionally, the interior stairwell that led to the second-floor dwelling was revised to be an exterior (open) stairwell and a new covered porch was created to provide entry

into the new unit. By proposing an ADU with a slightly reduced floor plan, the proposed project is no longer subject to the landscape provision because of required state exemptions from local zoning regulations.

ANALYSIS

The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing garage structure and construct a new detached two-story structure, consisting of a four-car garage and second story ADU with a roof deck. The new garage and ADU will be constructed at the rear of the property in the same location as the existing structure.

The proposed project requires the approval of the CHC because the proposed new construction exceeds 250 square feet of new area and is potentially visible from the street. To be granted approval, the project must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and meet the criteria for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness. The proposed ADU is permitted by-right under the City Zoning ordinance and the R-2-L zoning of the property, as well as by State law, subject to compliance with unit size requirements and conformance with Design Guidelines and other ADU requirements. As it pertains to the ADU in particular, the CHC's purview is limited to design review for consistency with historic district standards, pursuant to Section 2.63.080 of the City of Long Beach Municipal Code (CHC).

PROPOSAL

The new two-story building is rectangular in shape, measuring 50 feet 10 inches by 26 feet 4 inches and features a cantilevered second floor. The ground floor consists of two attached, two car garages, a storage room, a laundry room, and an exterior stairwell which leads to the second-floor ADU above. The ADU consists of a living room, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms and two bathrooms. The two-story building will also feature a 624 square foot roof deck.

The proposed building will be located in the same location as the existing garage. The new building will be located approximately 102 feet to the rear of the existing house, leaving the existing primary residence and tennis court unchanged. The new structure complies with the required side and rear setbacks. The garages are proposed with a zero setback along the (west) side yard, a four-foot setback along the (east) side yard and two-foot setback along the rear property line. The second floor consists entirely of living area for the new ADU and is proposed with a four-foot side yard setback and a one-foot rear yard setback. State Law provides that ADUs with up to 800 square feet of living area are exempt from development standards and ADU's with two-bedrooms and up to 1,000 square feet of living area are permitted, if it meets lot coverage, open space and floor area ratio (FAR) including the full gross square footage of the ADU project; the subject project meets the development standards that are applicable to the ADU the lot coverage of the proposed project is 32%, which is below the maximum lot coverage of 40% and is well in excess of the minimum 8% per unit open space requirement. Floor area ratio is not regulated/limited in the R-2-L zoning district.

The development standards for the R-2-L zone limit building heights to not more than 35 feet and two stories. The new two-story building complies with the height requirement. The building is proposed with a maximum height of 24 feet 11 inches, as measured to the top of the roof deck guardrails.

The Zoning Code requires two enclosed parking spaces for the primary dwelling unit. Under State Law, the ADU does not require additional on-site parking. The plans illustrate two separate, two-car garages, which reflect a surplus of required parking. One of the two-car garages will feature 420 square feet of area and the other two-car garage will include a storage area and will total 496 square feet in area. Vehicular access for the new garages will continue to be taken from the alley. The project proposes the required 22-foot vehicular back up which includes the use of the alley¹.

The new structure has been designed in a contemporary style but will feature similar exterior finishes found on the existing Neo-Georgian contributing structure located on the front half of the property. The new building exterior will feature smooth stucco, accenting red brick veneer (El Dorado Stone Tundrabrick, Riverbed), and concrete roof tiles (Eagle Roofing Capistrano Dark Terra Cotta). The structure will feature decorative elements such as wood corbels located beneath the cantilevered overhangs, wood windows and doors (Pella Reserve Style) and three Juliette balconies with black metal railings. Two 18-foot-wide wood garage doors (Timberline Classic Collection) are featured on the structure's rear (north) elevation facing the alley. The structure will feature an off-white stucco color (El Dorado Stone) and white fascia boards (Attachment C - Plans).

The plans illustrate that the new building will feature a combination of fixed, casement and awning wood framed windows. In an effort to ensure the windows are compatible with the windows on the contributing structure, a condition was added to require high-quality wood windows and that all of the new windows will be recessed and will feature wood trims and sills.

COMPATIBILITY

The new structure has been designed in a contemporary style. It will feature stucco exterior walls, wood windows, and will feature a cantilevered second floor accented with wood beams. The new two-story structure was designed to be compatible with the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance and the Bluff Park Design Guidelines and to complement the neighborhood at large. The new building will be located at the rear of the property adjacent to the alley and the design of the building will not negatively impact the appearance or character of the neighborhood.

The Bluff Park Historic Ordinance states that "Construction...shall conform to the bulk, mass, scale, and height of the majority of existing structures on both sides of the block...The style of architecture, use of materials...shall not be uncharacteristically different from the predominant

¹ LBMC Section 21.41.243(A) allows for a two-foot reduced vehicle backup when the garage door is widened by two feet.

style of the immediate surroundings.” The new two-story building is compatible with the existing neighborhood development patterns found within Bluff Park, in which it is typical to have residential dwelling units located above detached garages.

The Bluff Park Design Guidelines specify that:

“new construction should be generally compatible with the existing contributing buildings in size, scale, setbacks, height massing, design, materials and architectural style to protect the overall character of the historic district...New construction is expected to reasonably blend in...The contributing residences within the Bluff Park Historic District are varied in style, but they are primarily two stories in height. New construction should include features like a gabled, pitched or flat roof with a parapet, wood or stucco cladding, traditional decorative features, prominent porches, rectangular windows and door openings and conform to the prevailing height and setback in the district, especially that of the contributing properties immediately adjacent to the proposed new construction.”

Consistent with the above, the new building has been designed similar to the adjacent properties and the properties located on the same block of Ocean Boulevard. The adjacent properties are developed with two-stories and most of the structures located adjacent to the alley are developed with second-story dwelling units located above garages. The new building will be compatible in size, mass, and scale to the existing buildings within the district.

The new building features stucco walls, rectangular shaped windows, and clay roof tiles. The design of the new structure is compatible with the existing developments within the neighborhood and the district in general. The proposal has been conditioned to incorporate specific design features such as the use of high-quality wood windows and that all of the new windows will be recessed and will feature wood trims and sills.

The proposed project is compatible with the existing residence’s scale, mass, and architectural style as well as that of the district. 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...” In compliance with Standard No. 9, the proposed two-story building is designed in a contemporary architectural style that borrows from the materials and features of the primary, contributing structure on the lot, but is also differentiated by its lower height and its more simplified, unadorned design, as compared to that of the primary historic structure. Moreover, the new building will be located at the rear of lot and will be properly screened from view from Ocean Boulevard by the two-story main residence located at the front of the lot.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Written comments were received in May for the original project (Attachment D – Public Comments). During that time, it was brought to staff and the Commission’s attention that the primary house was being operated as a short-term rental (ABnB). The comments received

expressed concerns that the primary dwelling unit being utilized as a short-term rental (ABnB) negatively affects the character and affordability of the legally recognized historic neighborhood, and commenters speculated that the new second dwelling unit would also be used as a short-term rental. Another concern was that an existing side property line wall was falling over, that it was unsafe and that the property owners were not taking responsibility for repairing it. Similarly, a written comment was received for this revised proposal now before the CHC, expressing the same concerns related to the short-term rental use and disrepair of the side yard wall.

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, the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance and the Bluff Park Design Guidelines.

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a new two-story building consisting of a 986-square foot, four-car garage and storage area, a 998-square-foot ADU located on the second floor above the garage and a 624-square-foot roof deck located at the rear of the lot, subject to the conditions of approval (Attachment E - Conditions of Approval).

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 structure on the property and with the context of the Bluff Park Historic District (Attachment F - Findings).

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

A total of 464 public notices were distributed on September 13, 2021.

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Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments: Attachment A – Vicinity Map
Attachment B – Photographs
Attachment C – Plans
Attachment D – Public Comments
Attachment E – Conditions of Approval
Attachment F – Findings