



Bluff Park Neighborhood Association

HISTORIC DISTRICT

October 25, 2021

Julianna Roosevelt, Chair
Cultural Heritage Commission, City of Long Beach
411 W. Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, California 90802

RE: Agenda # 21-034 - 1127 East 1st Street in the Bluff Park Historic District

Dear Commission Chair Roosevelt, Vice Chair Irvine, Members Grisafe, Hinds, Hunter, McGuan and Ramos:

Coming to the meeting of the City of Long Beach Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) on October 26, 2021, is a proposal at 2711 East 1st Street in the Bluff Park Historic District to construct a new two-story rear structure and a one-story addition to the existing single family residence.

The Bluff Park Neighborhood Association (BPNA) Board of Directors appreciates and supports the one-story addition to the primary residence in the rear and the homeowners' intentions to restore the contributing primary residence. We also thank Maryanne Cronin for the conversations we had with her on this proposal.

However, our main concern is the inappropriately large size, mass, and scale of the new detached, two-story, rear structure. We feel it does not conform to the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance and Bluff Park Historic District Design Guidelines in blending in with and being subordinate to the primary residence.

As designed, the front historic home will be dwarfed against the bulk at the rear.

SIZE

- Front home: 2,034 square feet (before adding 118 SF)
- New rear structure: 2,539 square feet (not including the decks)
- New rear structure is 25% more square feet than the main home

HEIGHT

- Front home: On elevation page A1.6, it is noted as 27 feet, 5 inches from the ground to the top of the roof's ridge
- New rear structure: 26 feet, 9 inches tall
- New structure is just 8 inches shorter than the main house. That is less than a 3% difference.

(continued)

MASS

- Front home: Less than 10 feet tall to the bottom of the roof line.
- New rear structure: 19 feet tall to the bottom of the roof line.
- New rear structure has almost double the height, as measured from the ground to the bottom of the roof line.
- The visible amount and pitch of the main home's roof gives it a less massive appearance than the new construction.

SCALE

- New rear structure is wider than the main house.
- In the 3D drawings, the new rear home seems to be the same or of larger scale than the main home.
- The steep pitch of the primary home lightens up its wall massing. This feature is not present on the rear structure, and that makes the rear structure appear to have a larger scale.

The Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance on page 4 says, "New Construction or Alterations: Construction in Bluff Park District shall conform to the bulk mass, scale, and height of the majority of existing structures on both sides of the street on the block on which the new structure is to be erected." The Guidelines also state that the Cultural Heritage Commission shall apply those standards when making decisions about Certificates of Appropriateness.

The Bluff Park Historic District Design Guidelines on page 34 says, "New construction should be generally compatible with the existing contributing buildings in size, scale, setback, height, massing, design, materials and architectural style to protect the overall character of the historic district.

According to current zoning requirements, structures on this block may be up to 35 feet tall. However, the CHC is required to consider the language of the Ordinance and Design Guidelines which require that new construction blend in with the existing historic homes on the block.

The massing of a structure is generally impacted by its façade projections, rooflines, and reliefs.

While our main concern is the inappropriately large mass and scale of the new rear structure, here are some other questions or concerns that we would like to pose for consideration:

Decks

While outdoor decks are not typical in Bluff Park homes, and are discouraged by the design guidelines, three proposed decks seem contemporary and wonder how they contribute in the design's nod to the contributing historical home.

Industrial decor railings do not appear appropriate for our district.

Windows

Teresa Stamoulis, Vice President of Historic Preservation

BPNA appreciates the homeowner's intent to address the steel in casement windows in the contributing home, once it is established how the original window was designed.

It is our understanding that homeowner's must present to the City Planning office a detailed report on the windows in the new rear structure. The windows are to conform to Bluff Park Design Guidelines.

cc:

The new West Elevation Rear Unit with the cantilevered second floor seems very monolithic and has no window penetrations, cornices or detail- basically a floating box. It has multiple closets along the interior of that wall but it seems windows would help break up that wall tremendously and add more natural light too.

Jeff Mamm, President
Christopher Knontz, Deputy Director, City of Long Beach Development Services
Oscar Ordoñez, Director, City of Long Beach Development Services
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