

December 9, 2019

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a Modification to a previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness (HP18-099) to modify the height of the proposed elevator tower and approval of windows to be used throughout the building. The historic building is located at 210 East Ocean Boulevard and is a Designated Historic Landmark building known as The Breakers building. (District 2)

APPLICANT: Patrick Enrich and Nathan Morries
Arco Construction
900 North Rock Hill Road
Saint Louis, MO 63119
(Application No. COAC1911-02)

THE REQUEST

The applicant is requesting a Modification to a previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness which granted exterior building modifications including restoration work, roof modifications, and the addition of an elevator tower to the east wall, in conjunction with a change of use to hotel. The building is a designated local historic landmark building located at 210 East Ocean Boulevard. The current request involves increasing the height of the previously approved elevator tower by 4 feet 9 inches and approval of the proposed windows.

BACKGROUND

The subject site, 210 East Ocean Boulevard, is located on the south side of Ocean Boulevard between Locust Avenue to the west and Collins Way to the east (Exhibit A – Location Map), within the PD-6 (Downtown Shoreline Plan Area) District. Victory Park abuts the subject property to the north. The site is developed with the historic landmark building known as the “Breakers Building.”

On August 13, 2018, the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) approved the project. The approval included changes to the building exterior and interior in order to convert the building back to its original use as a hotel. The most notable and visible building modification includes the addition of an elevator tower along the east tower wall. The second most visible alteration



CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

December 9, 2019

Page 2 of 4

includes the removal of the non-period windows and replacement with new aluminum double hung windows.

On November 15, 2018 the Planning Commission granted approval of a Site Plan Review, Conditional Use Permit, and Local Coastal Development Permit to permit a change of use and renovation of the building into a 185-room hotel. The applicants have obtained building permits and the project is currently under construction (Exhibit B – Photos).

ANALYSIS

During the course of planning and construction the applicants discovered two structural columns in the hoist way of elevator #1 which is the proposed gurney elevator. Elevator #1 has an existing elevator hoistway, since the original elevator in this location served the basement to 2nd floor level. The narrow hoistway severely limits the options for the placement of necessary mechanical equipment and consequently it is necessary to use an elevator with an overhead traction system which has Building Code requirements for vertical clearance and is why the height increase is necessary. While the basement level will also be used for mechanical equipment, it cannot accommodate all of the necessary equipment. The applicants have reviewed several different alternatives and approaches to accommodating all mechanical equipment in the basement level, but it is infeasible due to the existing hoistway conditions and structural limitations. The only practical solution is for an elevator design that has overhead traction equipment over the elevator. The result is that the elevator height will increase, and the applicants are requesting a modification to increase the height by 4 feet 9 inches. The original elevator tower design increased the height of the existing structure by 3 feet 3 inches; the proposed modification would be in addition to that initial height increase.

The elevator tower design approved by the CHC is shown in the attached plans (Exhibit C – Plans). The very top of the elevator tower was designed to align with a string course at the base of the cupola. The string course is the simple band stretching horizontally over the arches in the cupola base. In the revised elevations, the elevator height would align with the top cap of the corner baluster in the deck railing located at the northeast corner. The increase in height is necessary to accommodate the elevator, meet building code requirements and screen all associated equipment. The requested modification would modify a part of the building that was approved by the CHC and is not original to the building. While still visible all rights-of-way, under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards it will be very clearly distinguished as new and not an original part of the building. The need to accommodate a code-compliant elevator is critical for the project. The elevator would provide a full-size gurney elevator access across all levels of the building allowing for internal connection of all parts of the building that are not currently and improving the safety of the building for future occupants. The exterior would be finished in stucco and painted to match the previously approved building color.

The 2018 CHC approval includes installation of new windows throughout the building. The approval was for installation of new double hung aluminum windows. As part of this process, a conceptual approval was granted by the Commission at the time (an approval in concept). Due to the unique nature of historic buildings, colors and materials are critical elements that define

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

December 9, 2019

Page 3 of 4

and/or characterize a building. During the construction process the applicants installed a mock-up window using the approved window concept (Exhibit D – Window Photos and Specifications). The purpose of the mock-up window is to demonstrate the appearance of the windows once installed. In staff's view, the windows are flat in nature and it was recommended that the applicants identify alternative windows and provide those window samples and/or specifications to the Planning Bureau for review.

Upon further review, and having had the benefit of being able to view the appearance of the mock-up window, staff now concludes that the windows are reasonable given their visibility and distance from the public right-of-way. Due to the location and depth of Victory Park, the distance at which they would be seen from the sidewalk (a distance of 80 feet at west corner of the property and 60 feet at the east corner of the property). The depth and profile of the windows would be imperceptible at that distance to the general public. The windows at upper levels of the building would be seen at an even greater distance due to their height above street level on the 14-story building.

The requested modifications should also be viewed in the totality of the project. The building has been underused for several years and lacked significant investment to preserve and protect the building. The proposed project will ensure the rehabilitation and activation of the building. Furthermore, the proposed project restores the building to its original historic use.

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 of the Long Beach Municipal Code, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

All the findings can be made in the affirmative for the proposed improvements (Exhibit E – Findings). Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, subject to the conditions of approval (Exhibit F – Conditions of Approval).

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In accordance with Section 15301(e), Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project was found to be exempt from further environmental review.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

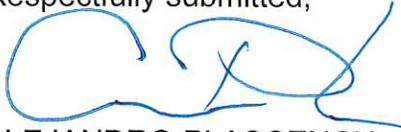
A total of 2,055 public hearing notices were distributed on November 25, 2019 in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. Public hearing notices were mailed to all property owners and occupants within a 750 radius of the subject property. At the time of writing this report, staff has not received any comments or written correspondence.

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

December 9, 2019

Page 4 of 4

Respectfully submitted,



ALEJANDRO PLASCENCIA
PROJECT PLANNER



PATRICIA A. DIEFENDERFER, AICP
ADVANCE PLANNING OFFICER



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER

CK:PD:ap:

Attachments: Exhibit A – Location Map
Exhibit B – Photos
Exhibit C – Plans
Exhibit D – Window Photos and Specifications
Exhibit E – Findings
Exhibit F – Conditions of Approval