



# CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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March 11, 2019

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS  
City of Long Beach  
California

## RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition of 673 square-feet total to an existing single-family home and second dwelling unit consisting of a 93-square-foot addition to the first floor of the primary home; a 443-square-foot addition to the second floor of the primary home; and, a 137-square-foot addition to expand an existing two-car garage to accommodate three cars with a deck above at the rear of the property. The property is located at 2800 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street and is a contributing structure in the Bluff Park Historic District.(Council District 3)

APPLICANT: Jonathan Mejia  
3735 Cherry Avenue  
Long Beach, CA 90807  
(Application No. COAC 1901-05)

## THE REQUEST

The applicant requests approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition of 673 square-feet total to an existing single-family home and second dwelling unit consisting of a 93-square-foot addition to the first floor of the primary home; a 443-square-foot addition to the second floor of the primary home; and, a 137-square-foot addition to expand an existing two-car garage to accommodate three cars with a deck above at the rear of the property. The property is located at 2800 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street and is a contributing structure in the Bluff Park Historic District.

## BACKGROUND

The subject property is located at 2800 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street, on the southeast corner of Temple Avenue and East 1<sup>st</sup> Street (Exhibit A – Location Map) within the R-2-L zone (Two-Family Residential, Large Lot). The property is developed with a 1,730-square-foot, two-story single-family home built in 1920. In the rear yard, there is a detached 333-square-foot two-car garage with a 324-square-foot second dwelling unit directly above, also built in 1920. The primary and secondary dwelling units are contributing structures within the Bluff Park Historic District.

The primary and secondary dwelling units are designed in the Prairie architectural style with terraced massing and setbacks that emulate symmetrical layering typically found in the Prairie style, with an expansive first floor and reduced and centrally located second floor. The massing forms and scales of the primary and secondary dwelling units are highlighted by stucco walls with light cream and tan colors that are joined at sharply-squared edges with a variety of architectural protrusions and extensions that also convey symmetrical or balance massing. The architectural forms are further emphasized by a flat roof with a parapet, horizontal cornices, boxed eaves, horizontal trim that wraps the base of the home, and wide bands of windows that are grouped side-by-side on the first and second story. True to the Prairie style, the existing first-floor features large and centered entrance patios projecting from the home towards the street-facing elevations, supported by heavy block columns that further accent the symmetry of the home. The predominant architectural styles found in Bluff Park include large two-story Craftsman Bungalows and Period Revival styles, which includes the Prairie style.

The subject property is well preserved and retains many of its original historic forms and architectural elements. Original wood windows and doors are found throughout both the primary and secondary dwelling units. Previous owners applied a lace-finish stucco to both the primary and secondary residences, and concrete-fiberboard siding was added to the balcony and stairway landing at the rear of the secondary dwelling unit. The applicant is proposing to refinish the entire property with smooth stucco as appropriate for the Prairie style. Most recently, a low stucco wall was granted a Certificate of Appropriateness in July 2017, but there are no other additions or major changes made to the property (Exhibit B – Site Photos).

### **ANALYSIS**

The proposed project requires approval of the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) because the size of the area to be demolished and the proposed addition exceeds the 250-square-foot threshold for staff-level approval. In order to be granted CHC approval, the project must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation and meet the criteria for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The proposed project consists of the following:

- 1) A 93-sq. ft. addition to the first floor at the rear of the home on the east elevation to support a larger bedroom and a relocated bathroom and kitchen. The applicant will be required to introduce a screed line, trim piece, or equivalent, to differentiate the old from the new, per the Secretary of the Interior Standard Number 9.
- 2) A 443-square-foot addition to the second floor of the primary dwelling – this addition will be located on the southeast corner of the second floor along the interior east-facing and south-facing elevations, with minimized visibility from the public right-of-way and primary facades.

- 3) The removal of a 126-sq. ft. balcony and stairway with non-historic vertical concrete-fiberboard siding with a “soft-story” or open area below. It will be replaced with a 137-sq. ft. addition to the expand the current two-car garage into a three-car garage that is fully enclosed and incorporated into the overall property with smooth stucco siding. The new first-floor garage will support a new balcony and stairway landing above the new garage space leading to the second floor. While this addition will add square footage at the rear of the second unit, the resulting structure will replace the “soft-story” or open space below with an enclosed garage, but the new garage will not add significant massing or changes in the configuration of the existing property. The Applicant will be required to introduce a screed line, or equivalent, to differentiate the old from the new structure, per the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation Number 9.
- 4) The applicant is also proposing to re-stucco the entire home, inclusive of all new additions, with a smooth finish. The existing stucco has a rough or sand finish and is considered non-historic.

In order to preserve and restore the property’s Prairie architectural style, the applicant proposes to maintain the original height and architectural elements of the flat roof on the primary dwelling (19 feet to top of ridge). Per staff’s recommendation, the applicant proposes to set back a portion of the second-floor addition on the facade facing East 1<sup>st</sup> Street to retain the layered relationship between the first and second floors.

In conjunction with the additions, the applicant will restore all existing and original wood windows, and the applicant will replace all non-period windows with double-hung wood windows. All windows and doors to be added (14 windows; 3 French doors) will consist of historically-appropriate materials that match the Prairie architectural style.

All existing non-historic features, specifically the vertical concrete-fiberboard siding found on the rear of the secondary dwelling unit will be removed and replaced with smooth stucco to match the character of the property. The proposed 137-sq. ft. addition and 2-story deck and stairway landing will be finished with smooth stucco and a simple metal guardrail above a parapet, to match the character of the primary dwelling and the Prairie architectural style. In accordance with the City’s Prairie architectural style guide, *“Porches and balconies are commonly found features of the style,”* and, *“are most likely to be enclosed by a low masonry or stucco wall rather than a railing. Where they do exist, railings may consist of simple and sturdy wood balusters, handrails, and newel posts,”* (Prairie Style Guide, pg. 5).

While the proposed additions add functionality to the home, the character defining features, massing and configuration of the primary and secondary dwelling units will be preserved. Through the implementation of second-floor setbacks and by locating the additions at the rear and side of the property (away from public view), the property will retain its historic character, layered massing and relationships between the first and second floors and the Prairie style. The proposed additions and expansion of the primary and secondary dwelling units will maintain a reasonable scale within the context of the Bluff Park Historic District and the context of the block, largely consisting of two-

story structures, with many being two-story Craftsman, Period Revival and Prairie style homes, with multiple dwelling units on a single property.

All proposed additions – including all setbacks, building heights, densities, lot coverage, floor area ratio, and open space requirements – are in full compliance with the Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) for the R-2-L zone, Section 21.30.200.

In accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards the proposed project is compliant with the following Standards:

**Standard No. 2: "The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided."** The proposed first- and second-story additions to the primary dwelling will be located at the rear of the property, away from public views and adjacent right-of-ways. The proposed addition to the secondary dwelling unit will retain similar massing and scale as the existing property at the rear of the property. The proposed improvements also serve to replace non-historic concrete-fiberboard siding with smooth stucco that matches the historic character of the existing home and Prairie architectural style. Lastly, all proposed new openings, windows, doors, rooflines and other architectural elements will be located at the rear of the property, away from public view.

**Standard No. 9: "The new addition will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property"**. The proposed additions will be subordinate to the existing size and configuration of the original structures. Following construction, the property will maintain a reasonable scale and massing with surrounding properties. All new materials will be selected and designed to match the original character of the home.

Furthermore, Standard No. 9 states, "it is important that the new addition be visually distinguished from the historic building. The addition should not give a false sense of the property's historical development," and, "new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features." While the proposed additions will not be original features to the 1920 construction, the additions will incorporate consistent materials and elements compatible with the rest of the home and the Prairie style. In addition, the addition will incorporate wall recesses and screed lines into the stucco finish to clearly distinguish the old from the new structures.

**Standard No. 10: "New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired."** The proposed additions, while integrated into the existing buildings, will be able to be removed without deteriorating the original form of the structures. Specifically, the second-floor addition to the primary dwelling will not interfere with the original load-bearing wall on the east elevation. Similarly, the addition to the secondary dwelling unit

will not remove the existing load-bearing wall on the south elevation, should the proposed addition need to be removed or modified in the future.

### **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 the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance (C-6835) and District Guidelines.

All the findings can be made in the affirmative for the proposed improvements, which are compatible in overall scale, massing, proportions, materials and colors to the architectural style of the existing structure on the property and in the context of the District. Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness subject to the conditions of approval (Exhibit D – Findings and Conditions of Approval).

As conditioned, staff supports approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition of 673 square-foot total to an existing single-family home and second dwelling unit consisting of a 93-square-foot addition to the first floor of the primary home; a 443-square-foot addition to the second floor of the primary home; and, a 137-square-foot addition to expand an existing two-car garage to accommodate three cars with a deck above at the rear of the property. The property is located at 2800 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street and is a contributing structure in the Bluff Park Historic District. (District 3)

### **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Public notices were distributed on February 22, 2019. As of the date of this report, no objections have been filed as it relates to the project.

### **COASTAL REVIEW**

The subject property is located within the City of Long Beach Coastal Zone and is in the Non-appealable area. Per LBMC 21.25.906, the subject project will be required to apply for a Coastal Permit Categorical Exclusion (CPCE), pending approval of the Cultural Heritage Commission.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

In accordance with the 15301(e) Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), environmental review is not required for construction of small additions to residences that are less than 50 percent of the existing square footage or less than 2,500 sq. ft., whichever is less.

Respectfully submitted,



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP  
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER



ALEJANDRO PLASCENCIA  
PRESERVATION PLANNER



GABRIEL BARRERAS, AICP  
PROJECT PLANNER

CK:AP:gb

Attachments: Exhibit A – Location Map  
Exhibit B – Site Photos  
Exhibit C – Plans  
Exhibit D – Findings & Conditions of Approval