



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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September 12, 2016

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

City of Long Beach

California

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness request for construction of a 351-square-foot living area addition and a 217-square-foot open porch attached to the rear of an existing single-family residence at 3730 Gardenia Avenue. The building is a contributing structure within the California Heights Historic District. (District 7)

APPLICANT: Steve Carney and Megan Garvey
3730 Gardenia Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90807
(Application No. HP16-352)

THE REQUEST

The applicant requests approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a one-story 351-square-foot addition of living area to add a third bedroom and second bathroom, and also a 217-square-foot open porch attached to the rear of the building.

BACKGROUND

The subject property is located on the east side of Gardenia Avenue between Bixby Road to the north and 37th Street to the south (Exhibit A – Location Map). The 5,848 square-foot property is located within the R-1-N zone (Single-Family Residential District with Standard Lots) and is developed with a 1,242-square-foot, one-story, single-family residence and detached two-car garage which abuts a rear alley. The dwelling unit was constructed in 1939 according to City building permit records.

In August 2000, the California Heights Historic district was expanded by the Long Beach City Council to include the three blocks to the east of the district boundary to include Gaviota Avenue, Rose Avenue and Gardenia Avenue. The district expansion area is unique due to its abundance of Neo-Traditional style buildings constructed in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The immediate surrounding properties are all one-story single-family buildings.

The residence is constructed in a Neo-Traditional architectural style which became prevalent in the 1930s through the 1950s. This style is modest and simple in design. Typically, buildings in this style are single-story with rectangular massing and a hipped roof with minimal decorative embellishments. This building is one-story with stucco cladding as the primary exterior finish and wood siding along the front façade and portions of the side walls. The roof features a combination of hips and clad in asphalt shingle roofing. The front windows have four panes and an asymmetrical fenestration. The building is intact and in good condition (Exhibit B – Plans & Photographs).

ANALYSIS

The proposed project requires approval of the Cultural Heritage Commission because the size of the living area addition exceeds 250-square feet. In order 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 project consists of adding a master bedroom and bathroom, relocating the kitchen and dining area, relocating the office, and adding a new rear open porch to the back of the residence. All work is proposed to the rear of the house with no changes to the front building façade. The project replaces a small kitchen and provides a larger kitchen that opens up to the living room to make a more open and functional floor plan. The project results in a third bedroom and second bathroom.

Neo-Traditional architecture is a simple and functional style typical of the late Thirties and Forties, showing the influence of modernism as well as the austerity of the wartime years. Homes were typically one or one-and-one-half story in height and featured small, covered front porches, low pitched roofs, and walls clad in wood, stucco, or brick.

The project plans show a one-story addition primarily finished in stucco with the south elevation and porch featuring two upper rows of wood siding to match the front facade. The roof shingles for the existing portion of the building will be replaced and re-roofed when the addition is complete. The new windows in the addition will be wood. The frames, sills and horizontal mullions are to match the existing windows. The addition does incorporate building features from the existing building to better integrate the addition with the existing building including the porch, corner window with horizontal mullions and upper rows of wood siding under the roof eaves.

The character-defining features of this building are the one-story building form, stucco finish, upper wood siding, corner window with horizontal mullions, low-pitched roof and front covered porch. Specifically, the upper wood siding with deep channel grooves and window mullions give the building an appearance of horizontality. These features, located along the front façade, will remain unchanged with the proposed project.

Along the south elevation, the addition starts after a small recessed portion of the existing building. This alcove creates an appropriate differentiation and transition between the existing building and the new addition. Along the north elevation, a

condition has been added to provide scorelines to differentiate the existing building and the new addition.

The highest existing roof ridge measures 15-feet 9-inches in height, and a lower ridgeline measures 13-feet 9-inches. The overall height of the proposed addition will be 13-feet 7-inches and will be slightly lower than the existing structure and not visible from the public right-of-way. The scale of the addition is in character with the one-story building form. A condition has been added that final roofing material be approved by the Planning Bureau.

As proposed, a clerestory window is shown in the gable-end over the new kitchen and consists of four panes of glass panels. The applicant's intent in adding these windows is to allow more natural light into the kitchen and dining area. While staff understands the intent, this window style is not associated with the Neo-Traditional architectural style. Accordingly, staff has included a condition stating that the clerestory window be removed from the final drawings.

The style of the addition and proposed materials conforms with the existing building and other buildings throughout the California Heights Historic district.

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 2.63.070 (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 California Heights Historic District Ordinance. Staff supports approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a 351-square-foot living area addition and 217-square foot open porch attached to the rear of the existing single-family residence. All the findings can be made in the affirmative for the proposed improvements, as these improvements 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 C – Findings and Conditions of Approval).

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Public notices were distributed on August 18, 2016 and a notice was mailed to the California Heights Historic District Neighborhood Association. As of this date, no letters have been received.

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 single-family residences.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Christopher Koontz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly legible.

CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP
ADVANCE PLANNING OFFICER

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Linda F. Tatum". The signature is cursive and elegant, with the first name and last name clearly legible.

LINDA F. TATUM, AICP
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER

LFT:CK:AP

Attachments: Exhibit A – Location Map
Exhibit B – Plans & Photographs
Exhibit C – Findings & Conditions of Approval