



# CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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July 11, 2016

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS  
City of Long Beach  
California

## RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness request to paint a mural along the west building façade on an existing landmark property at 228 E. Broadway and located within the PD-30 zone. (District 2)

APPLICANT: Julia Huang  
228 E. Broadway  
Long Beach, CA 90802  
(Application No. HP16-249)

## THE REQUEST

The applicant, representing the property owner, Creative Realty, LLC, requests approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to paint a mural along the west facing façade of a historic landmark building.

## BACKGROUND

The subject property is located on the south side of E. Broadway between The Promenade to the west and Long Beach Boulevard to the east (Exhibit A – Location Map). The site is situated within the PD-30 zone (Downtown Plan Area) and is developed with the historic building known as the American Hotel. The building is also oftentimes referred to as the Psychic Temple. The building was constructed in 1905 and is one of the oldest remaining commercial buildings in the downtown area and an example of early commercial development in the City. The Broadway building façade has characteristics of the Romanesque Revival style which was popular in the 1890's.

In 1989, the three story brick commercial building was designated as a local historic landmark by the Cultural Heritage Commission. In 2010, the Cultural Heritage Commission granted a Certificate of Appropriateness to restore and rehabilitate the building exterior. The approval was extended and the project was completed in 2015 and is currently used as a creative office space.

## ANALYSIS

The applicant's Certificate of Appropriateness request is for authorization to paint a mural on the west side of the building. The mural would be painted on the building during the "Pow! Wow! Long Beach," which is a weeklong event in which artists organize gallery shows, lecture series, schools for art and music, creative community spaces, concerts and live art installations. As shown in the sketch, the proposed mural consists primarily of several hues of blue and white colors, and free-flowing wavy shapes (Exhibit B – Proposed Mural & Photographs). The mural would extend the full width and height of the building and will not promote any activity in the building or business services.

As a historically designated landmark, any alterations to the building must be completed in a manner that is compatible with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and must be approved by the Cultural Heritage Commission. In evaluating this request, there are some important factors to consider including location of the proposed mural and the location of the building's character defining features. The proposed mural is to be painted on the west wall of the building which is a secondary façade that abuts the alley and has no original remaining significant architectural features. The west wall does not have any original exposed brick since the west wall has been plastered and painted.

The primary façade along Broadway retains the important character defining features that characterize the building and no portion of the front wall will be painted. While not as architecturally significant as the primary façade, the east wall does retain some of the original exposed brick walls and will remain unaltered. Therefore, the painting of a mural on the west wall will not damage any original historic materials or character defining features of the building.

There are no alterations proposed to other areas of the building, including the character-defining features on the front façade. The proposed alteration, while not historic in nature, could be removed in the future if necessary. This is consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation No. 10 which reads "[n]ew additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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."

While unique colors and bold paint schemes are not appropriate for historic residential neighborhoods, they can be appropriate in a downtown setting. As the City of Long Beach encourages downtown as an arts and entertainment destination for residents and visitors, the proposed mural is consistent with this intent.

This request falls under the regulations of the Cultural Heritage Ordinance since the mural is proposed be painted on a designated historic landmark building. Murals are not regulated by the City's Zoning Ordinance unless they are painted to advertise or promote business services, in which case they would be regulated as a sign.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff has analyzed the proposed project and has determined that the project meets the requirements set forth in Section 2.63.070 (Cultural Heritage Commission) of the Long Beach Municipal Code, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. Staff supports approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the painting of a new mural on the west façade of the building. All the findings can be made in the affirmative for the proposed alterations, as the mural does not damage or alter any original historic building materials or character defining features. 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 June 27, 2016. As of this date, no letters have been received in response to the public notice.

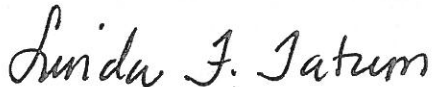
**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

In accordance with Section 15331 of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), environmental review is not required for maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for treatment of historic properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitation, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

Respectfully submitted,



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP  
ADVANCE PLANNING OFFICER



LINDA F. TATUM, AICP  
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER  
LFT:CK:AP

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