

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
COAC2201-05
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS
5354 East 2nd Street (Bank of Belmont Shore)
May 31, 2022

ANALYSIS:

In compliance with Section 2.63.080 of the City of Long Beach Municipal Code (Cultural Heritage Commission), the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (the Standards):

The project site is the Bank of Belmont Shore, which is a local landmark (Landmark Ordinance [Ord. C-7272]), designated in 1994. The project proposes to convert the ground floor area into a restaurant. As part of the project, 6,156 square feet of conditioned ground floor area (previous bank,) would be converted to indoor dining, kitchen and back of house areas, and patio dining area (non-conditioned space). The conversion of conditioned space to non-conditioned space would be accomplished along the 2nd Street façade by removing non-original arched window openings and constructing a new recessed wall approximately 14-feet towards the interior of the building, thereby creating an arcade area for patio dining. The new recessed wall would feature arched windows and a storefront entry to simulate the removed windows and door. New tile would be installed at the interior of the archways along 2nd Street. The existing 2nd Street windows and entry doors on the existing structure have been previously modified and replaced from the original condition.

FINDINGS: (from Section 2.63.080(D) of the Long Beach Municipal Code)

- 1. (It) will not adversely affect any significant historical, cultural, architectural or aesthetic feature of the Landmark or subject property within the Landmark District, and that issuance of the Certificate of Appropriateness is consistent with the spirit and intent of this chapter.**

The proposed project, as Conditioned, will not adversely affect the historical, cultural, architectural, or aesthetic features of the subject property (Bank of Belmont Shore). All work will be conducted pursuant to the Landmark Ordinance and guidelines of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. The proposed project would return a restaurant use to the structure, which was the original function of the property.

The subject property is currently developed with a 10,013-square-foot two-story commercial building, known as the Bank of Belmont Shore, and a surface parking lot with 20 off-street parking spaces (14 spaces and 6 tandem spaces). The eastern portion of the site features a surface parking lot with ornamental landscaping. A portion of the existing building cantilevers over existing parking spaces, functioning similar to a carport structure.

The Bank of Belmont Shore was designated as a local landmark in 1994 (Ord. C-7272). The building was originally constructed in 1929 in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, as Patty's Restaurant, the architect/engineer was Ray A. Sites of Long Beach. It was occupied by two (2) other restaurants until 1950, when a major remodeling was undertaken by Francis H. Gentry for the bank. The building today looks largely as it did after Gentry's remodel, although some additional modifications were made in 1986, which included the addition of a 2nd floor cantilevered area to the side of the building. In 1994, a tenant improvement was completed to convert the 1st floor to a video rental store. In 2011, a building permit was issued to change the retail use back into a bank use.

This building is one of the few early commercial structures on Second Street which has retained its original architectural character, and for which the succession of uses reflects a dynamic economic environment. The building's architectural style is in harmony with that of the surrounding residential neighborhood. The building consists of a single large rectangular hall with a corner tower and a covered porte-cochere on the east side (1986 alteration) (Attachment D - Site Photographs).

Large arched windows face Second Street, with subdivided and radiating muntins. There are smaller square window openings on the side façade; a small balconette with wrought iron railing is on the second story on the side facade. The roof is clad in red terracotta tile; and the walls are stucco. The side facade has been altered with rectangular relief strips framing the windows. The tower has a hipped roof and small arched windows with curved brackets, supporting a boxed cornice. The interior has been totally modernized; no historic fabric remains.

The existing commercial structure would remain in its original location and orientation to the lot, with the reuse of the building for a restaurant use. The proposed project would convert the ground floor area into a restaurant. As part of the project, 6,156 square-feet of conditioned ground floor area (previous bank use) would be converted to indoor dining, kitchen and back of house areas, and patio dining area (non-conditioned space). The conversion of conditioned space to non-conditioned space would be accomplished along the 2nd Street façade by removing the arched window openings and building a new recessed wall approximately 14-feet towards the interior of the building, thereby creating an arcade area for patio dining. The new recessed wall would incorporate arched windows and a storefront entry to simulate the removed windows and door. As conditioned, there would be no resizing of the existing arched openings as part of this application. New tile would be installed at the interior of the archways along 2nd Street. The existing 2nd Street windows and entry doors have been previously modified and replaced.

The project also includes the restoration of iron grilles at the corner tower element, addition of fabric awnings along the 2nd Street elevation, construction of a detached patio structure, installation of new mechanical equipment behind existing screening, and completion of associated Title 24 and life and safety upgrades to support the change of use.

At the tower element, two previously sealed openings would be restored on the 2nd Street frontage, behind metal wrought iron grilles to match historic building plans on file (Attachment C – Historic Plans). Furthermore, consistent with the historic plans, a 2nd wrought iron grille with no additional openings would be added on the Santa Ana elevation of the tower.

Consistent with the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style, three new fabric awnings would be installed over the modified window arches along the 2nd Street frontage. The final design of the awnings has been Conditioned to be consistent with the design of awnings in the Spanish Colonial Revival Architectural Style Guide. In addition, the plans include the removal of a non-historic fabric awning over the side entry on Santa Ana Avenue.

The project includes the addition of a detached patio cover and sidewalk dining areas. The detached patio area would feature a shade structure in a design complementary to the architectural style of the building. The sidewalk dining area would be enclosed with wrought iron railing to match the restored feature on the tower element.

The Landmark Ordinance acknowledges the building modifications that occurred over time with various changes of use: “Although remodeled for a succession of different businesses over the years, it has maintained a continuous presence amidst much demolition and new construction along Second Street.” (Ord. C-7272). The proposed changes would not alter the form or style of the existing building detracting from the historic presence this structure brings to this portion of 2nd Street. All proposed modifications to the landmark building under this permit would be reversible. New windows can be reinstalled in the openings to restore the building to its 1950 design. In addition, the restoration of features at the tower element ensures that physical changes to the exterior that are invasive, including the two new window openings, are consistent with historic building plans, and do not represent an irreversible departure from historic conditions. The project also restores the original restaurant use.

The new building features found on the landmark structure would be compatible with the 1929 construction. The building modifications will not adversely impact the overall significance of the building and would allow for the continued use of the building along a commercial corridor.

2. (It) will remedy any condition determined to be immediately dangerous or unsafe by the Fire Marshal and/or Building Official.

There are no active code enforcement cases or dangerous conditions at this site. Thus, this finding is not applicable.

3. (It) will comply with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for Preservation, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.*

The proposed project would convert the ground floor of a landmark building into a restaurant consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

Use – The site was previously used as a bank and office building. The building was originally constructed in 1929 Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style as Patty's Restaurant. The building was occupied by two (2) other restaurants until 1950, when a major remodeling was undertaken by Francis H. Gentry, for the Bank of Belmont Shore. Additional bank and retail uses also occupied the building. The proposed conversion of the building to the restaurant would be consistent with the original.

- Character – The building was originally constructed in 1929 Spanish Colonial Revival style as a restaurant. In 1950, the building underwent a major remodeling project by Francis H. Gentry, for the Bank of Belmont Shore. The building today looks largely as it did after Gentry's remodel, although some additional modifications were made in 1986, including the addition of a 2nd floor cantilevered area to the bank. The interior of the building was also remodeled in 1994 to convert the 1st floor to a video rental store. In 2011, a building permit was issued to change the retail use back into a bank use.

Throughout the history of the building uses, minor modifications occurred to the exterior of the structure. The Landmark Ordinance notes that this building is one of the few early commercial structures on Second Street which has retained its original architectural character, and for which the succession of uses reflects a dynamic economic environment. The proposed modifications to the building to change the ground floor use of the building to a restaurant include elements consistent with historic plans and with the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style. The proposed changes would be consistent with the character of the building.

- Changes to Historic Features – The proposed exterior modifications to the historic structure include the removal of non-original storefronts, restoration of iron grilles and openings at the corner tower element, addition of fabric awnings, construction of a detached patio structure, installation of new mechanical equipment, and completion of associated Title 24 and life and safety upgrades to support the change of use.

The conversion of conditioned space to non-conditioned space would be accomplished along the 2nd Street façade by removing the arched window openings and building a new recessed wall approximately 14-feet towards the interior of the building, thereby creating an arcade area for patio dining.

The new recessed wall would feature arched windows and a storefront entry to simulate the removed windows and door. As conditioned, there would be no resizing of the existing arched openings as part of this application (Attachment G – Conditions of Approval). New tile would be installed at the interior of the archways along 2nd Street. The existing 2nd Street windows and entry doors on the existing structure have been previously modified and replaced from the original condition.

- **Historic Significance** – The proposed changes to the exterior of the structure would include a combination of restoration of elements (wrought iron grilles and openings at tower element) and reversible building treatments consistent with the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style (removal of windows and addition of tile at arched openings, new awnings, new detached patio). The significance of the landmark structure would not be diminished with the proposed project as the existing architecture has been highly modified from the original design. The form and significance of the structure would not be diminished as part of this project.
- **Distinctive Features** – The existing structure has been altered from its original design, including an addition completed in 1986. The project would restore window openings and wrought iron grilles at the tower element. These distinctive features are documented on historic plans. The remainder of the proposed modifications would be to elements that have changed over time, including non-original window storefronts at existing arched openings along the 2nd Street façade.
- **Deteriorated Historic Features** – No changes are proposed to the remaining original historic features. The proposed exterior modifications to the building are changes to non-historic building components onsite.
- **Damage to Historic Materials** – The existing structure has been modified from its historic condition. No historic materials would be damaged as a result of the project. Conditions of Approval have been placed on the project to ensure that the arched openings are not resized as part of the project. There would be no damage or modification to historic materials as part of the project.
- **Archeological Resources** – Any archeological resources found will be protected and preserved. No resources are known.
- **Historic Materials that Characterize the Property** – The landmark structure has undergone multiple remodeling projects by the time of landmark designation in 1994. The Landmark Ordinance acknowledges the form and character of the building, and the changes of use that have occurred onsite. There are no historic materials that would be removed as part of the project. Distinctive elements at the tower element would be restored consistent with historic plans.

- **Form and Integrity** – The project would include minor modifications to the exterior of the landmark building. The restoration of window openings and wrought iron grilles to the tower element would be consistent with the historic design of the 1929 construction. The remainder of the elements added to the structure affect non-historic elements. The new patio area would be detached from the historic structure and would not detract from the building. Furthermore, the project does not propose the reversal of past building remodeling, which contributes to the relevance of the building as a representation of the dynamic commercial environments on 2nd Street. The form and integrity of the building would remain intact with the proposed project.

In accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, *Standard No. 9* states the new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property or the district as a whole. The proposed modifications would include restoration of documented building elements that have been removed, while also completing reversible changes consistent with the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style. The building was landmarked in an altered state and the ordinance acknowledges the modifications that have occurred over time. The proposed changes are consistent with the dynamic history of the property, including the original use as a restaurant.

Standard No. 9. also states that “new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features...” The remodeled building will be distinguished by materials that are differentiated from but complementary to the original construction. The materials used on the remodeled areas would be consistent with the original period of significance for the building.

4. (It) will comply with the Design Guidelines for Landmark Districts, for a property located within a Landmark District.

The subject property is a locally designated landmark building. This building has undergone remodeling projects since construction in 1929, which includes conversion to a bank in 1950 and an addition in 1986. The landmark ordinance notes that the commercial structure has retained its original architectural character. The proposed project included elements of restoration based on historic plans, but does not include the reversal of subsequent remodeling work back to 1929 design. The subsequent remodeling elements from 1950 and 1986 will remain intact as part of the project and new building elements would be consistent and compatible with the historic architectural style.

The conversion of the building back to its original use also contributes to the relevance of the building as a focal point of the Belmont Shore neighborhood. The proposed project would comply with the design guidelines for the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style, which is the original style of the building. The project

incorporates several architectural features of the existing style that integrates the structure without removing form or overall significance of the landmark building. Conditions of Approval have been included to ensure the arched window openings are not removed and that the final selection of materials are compatible with the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The form and character of the building would remain intact with completion of the project, and the use of a restaurant at the ground floor would be consistent with the original use of the building and further reinforce the long-standing presence of this structure within the commercial portion of the Belmont Shore area.