

March 30, 2021

**CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS**

City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

A Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of an existing 240-square-foot, one-car garage and construction of a one-story, detached, 771-square-foot structure consisting of a 388-square-foot accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and 383-square-foot two-car garage at the rear half of the property. The property is located at 279 Molino Avenue, and the existing primary structure, located in the front of the lot, is a contributing structure in the Bluff Heights Historic District. (District 2)

**APPLICANT:** Deborah Regan  
279 Molino Avenue  
Long Beach, CA 90803  
(Application No. COAC2011-01)

**THE REQUEST**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing 240-square-foot one-car garage and construct a new one-story, detached, 771-square-foot structure consisting of a 388-square-foot accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and 383-square-foot two-car garage at the rear half of the property. No new square-footage or improvements are proposed on the primary residence fronting Molino Avenue.

**BACKGROUND**

The subject property is located on Molino Avenue, between E. Broadway to the south and E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the north (Attachment A – Vicinity Map) within the R-2-A zone (Two-family Residential, Standard Lots). The property is developed with a single-family residence. The primary residence fronting Molino Avenue is a one-story, 1,120 square-foot single-family structure with a detached 240-square-foot one-car garage built in 1911 on a 6,750 square-foot lot. The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing one-car garage due to structural and foundation issues; the garage currently has no continuous foundation and no concrete slab on grade and has wood damage. The proposed project also involves the construction of a new one-story, detached, 771-square-foot structure consisting of a 388-square-foot accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and 383-square-foot two-car garage at the rear half of the property. The ADU consists of a kitchen, living room and bathroom.



The existing residential building is a Craftsman house that is a contributing structure in the Bluff Heights Historic District. The exterior cladding of the main dwelling consists of horizontal wood siding, double-hung and fixed wood windows, side gable roof, and a front porch facing Molino Avenue. The existing residence is well-preserved and retains most of its original features of the Craftsman architectural style.

In 2019, State legislation was adopted to address the housing crisis in California which mandates that ADUs to be permitted by local jurisdictions without entitlements. The proposed ADU is permitted by-right under the City Zoning ordinance and the R-2-A zoning of the property, as well as by State law, subject to compliance with unit size requirements and conformance with Design Guidelines and other ADU development standards. This application is limited to design review by the CHC, pursuant to Section 2.63.080 of the City of Long Beach Municipal Code (CHC), for consistency with historic district standards.

## **ANALYSIS**

The proposed project requires approval of the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) because the size of the new two-car garage exceeds 250 square-feet. 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 proposed detached, one-story, 771-square-foot structure includes a new two-car garage and new ADU. The proposed structure will be detached from the main residence fronting Molino Avenue. The garage/ADU structure will be setback 5'0" from the side property line to the north, 24'0" from the side property line to the south, 6'0" from the rear property line to the west and will be located 92'0" from the front property line to the east on the rear half of the lot, and will be entirely tucked behind the front, primary structure to the east and thus screened from view. The proposed garage/ADU structure is in a simple rectangular shape, 20 feet in width and approximately 37 feet in length. The proposed ADU consists of one bathroom, living and kitchen area (Attachment B- Plans). By proposing a detached garage/ADU, the project is able to comply with open space, yard and setback requirements as well parking turning radii. The proposed design facilitates a project that is entirely screened behind the primary residence, which is, typical of accessory structures in the neighborhood and in compliance with the Code requirements and the Bluff Heights Historic District Design Guidelines and Craftsman Style Guide.

The new roof would provide a 5:12 roof pitch and feature a gable roof with composition shingles similar to the predominant roof style established for the primary residence. The height of the primary residence facing Molino Avenue is 16'-11" to the peak of the roof and the height of the proposed garage and ADU structure is 11'-6" to the midpoint of the roof and 14'-2" to the highest peak of the roof. The proposed structure will match the existing pitch, style and roof orientation of the primary residence and not be visible from the front of the property.

The proposed ADU includes five (5) double-hung wood windows while no windows are proposed for the new garage. As proposed, and consistent with applicable, historic district guidelines, all windows in the proposed ADU shall be historically appropriate wood windows and shall have wood trim to match the existing window trim on the primary residence. Several other architectural features are incorporated into the new garage and ADU design to integrate the proposed structure with the architectural style of the existing residence, including horizontal wood siding, roof pitch, gable roof, roof orientation, composite roof shingles, exposed rafter tails, triangular brackets, attic vents under the gabled roof, and a carriage-style garage door for the garage portion of the structure.

The primary dwelling is currently painted in a muted green color with beige cream trims and burgundy highlights facing Molino Avenue (Attachment C - Photographs). In order to ensure compatibility among all the structures on the lot as well as compatibility of the proposed structure with the Secretary of Interior Standards and the Bluff Heights Historic District Design Guidelines, the owner will be required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness to paint the new garage/ADU structure as well as the existing primary dwelling; the structures will be required to be painted in colors that are appropriate for the Craftsman architectural style, prior to issuance of final Certificate of Occupancy for the ADU.

#### Compatibility with Neighborhood

The Bluff Heights Historic District Design Guidelines and ordinance provide guidance for ADUs and encourage that they be constructed in the rear of the properties and designed to minimize their visibility from the public right-of-way. The ordinance further states that ADUs should be architecturally compatible with the historic building design. As proposed, the project will maintain an appropriate scale with the context of the Bluff Heights Historic District and context of the block which consists of a mix of one-, two- and three-story structures, consisting of a variety of architectural styles ranging from Craftsman, and Minimal Traditional to Mid-Century Modern multi-family apartment buildings. At least five other contributing Craftsman residences on Molino Avenue within the vicinity have additional units and garage buildings in the rear of the property. As proposed, the scale and size of the proposed garages and ADU do not detract from the existing main dwelling as a contributing structure or as a primary structure, and it preserves the historic integrity of the primary structure and the surrounding area, in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards.

The proposed structure is compatible with the existing residence's architectural style, yet does not give a false sense of the property's historical development, in accordance with Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard No. 9, which states that "new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features..." The new garage and ADU structure have been designed to complement and match the architectural style of the primary residence but it is detached from the main dwelling and differentiated by a height difference from the original primary residence. The proposed project represents a simplified, contemporary interpretation of the Craftsman

style that will provide a cohesive design between the new garage/ADU and the existing main dwelling.

As designed, the proposed project will have no visibility from Molino Avenue and will be compatible with the neighborhood and adjacent properties within the vicinity as there are a number of properties on the block and in the vicinity that contain ADUs and other accessory structures. The proposed project is located in a context in which many lots have multiple structures and in which there are a variety of architectural styles and building scales. To the south on Molino Avenue, abutting the property there is a two-story multi-family building built outside of the period of significance and to the north the following two properties are historic two-story Craftsman residences with multiple units and garages in the rear of the property. Additionally, there are also two-story and three-story apartment buildings that were built outside of the period of significance on the same street and multiple two-story buildings on the same street. Given this varied existing context, the proposed project is compatible with the neighborhood. The proposed will be consistent and in full compliance with the City's residential development standards for the R-2-A (Two-Family Residential, Accessory Second Unit) zoning district, the Bluff Heights Historic District Ordinance C-7937 and the Craftsman Style Guide. The proposed garage and ADU are in the rear half of the property and will be compatible with yet distinguishable from the original main dwelling.

### **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 Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings and the Bluff Heights Historic District Ordinance. Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, subject to the conditions of approval (Attachment D – Findings and Conditions of Approval), for the demolition of an existing 240-square-foot one-car garage and construction of a new one-story, detached, 771-square-foot structure consisting of a 388-square-foot accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and 383-square-foot two-car garage at the rear half of the property. All the findings can be made in the affirmative for the proposed improvements, as these improvements are compatible in overall scale, massing, proportions and materials to the architectural style of the existing structure on the property and with the context of the District.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Based on that assessment, the City has determined the project to be Categorically Exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to the provisions of Article 19 Section 15303 (a) (new construction or conversion of small structures) of the CEQA Guidelines. No further environmental review is required.

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

On March 16, 2021, 1129 public notices were mailed. As of this date, no letters were received in response to this project.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Refugio Torres Campos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

REFUGIO TORRES CAMPOS  
PROJECT PLANNER

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alejandro Plascencia". The signature is cursive and stylized, with a large initial "A".

ALEJANDRO PLASCENCIA  
PRESERVATION PLANNER

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patricia A. Diefenderfer". The signature is cursive and stylized, with a large initial "P".

PATRICIA A. DIEFENDERFER, AICP  
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER

PD:AP:rtc

Attachments: Attachment A – Vicinity Map  
Attachment B – Plans  
Attachment C – Photographs  
Attachment D – Findings and Conditions of Approval