

June 29, 2021

**CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS**

City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new 375 square foot ground floor addition and a new second floor addition to the rear of an existing single-story residence addressed as 3042 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, a contributing structure to the Rose Park South Historic District. (District 2)

**APPLICANT:** Thomas Johnson  
3901 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Long Beach, CA 90803  
(Application No. COAC2103-01)

**THE REQUEST**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new 375-square foot ground floor addition and a new 824-square foot second floor addition to the rear of an existing single-story residence.

**BACKGROUND**

The subject property is located on the south side of 6<sup>th</sup> Street, between Orizaba and Obispo Avenues. (Attachment A - Vicinity Map), within the R-2-N zone (Single Family Residential, Normal Lots). The subject property is developed with a 936-square foot, single-story residence built in 1913 located at the front of the property and addressed as 3042 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street and a 1,000-square foot two story apartment building built in 1922 located at the rear of the lot and addressed as 3044 and 3046 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Both buildings are contributing structures in the Rose Park South Historic District (Attachment A - Location Map).

The subject property is 6,750 square feet in total lot area (50 feet wide by 135 feet deep). The single-story residence is located approximately 13-feet from the front property line, 1-foot 10-inches from the (west) side property line, 18-feet 11-inches from the (east) side property line and 34-feet 5-inches from the apartment building located at the rear of the lot. The apartment building is located approximately 20-feet from the rear property line, 13-feet one inch from the (west) side property line and zero-feet from the (east) side property line. A driveway approach



is located along the east side of the property which leads to the original ribbon driveway. The existing one-story residence was constructed in the Craftsman architectural style and the two-story apartment building was constructed in a vernacular Italianate architectural style.

The single-story Craftsman home is rectangular in shape and features a front facing gable roof system with smaller side gables over an extended pop-out wall feature. The home features an off-centered covered porch, exterior wood cladding, wood windows and 24-inch wide overhanging eaves with exposed rafters. The house retains all its original wood windows.

The two-story apartment building is rectangular in shape and features wood exterior cladding, wood windows and a flat roof. A decorative overhanging eave supported by decorative brackets wraps around the building top on all four elevations. According to building permits, the building was originally constructed as a garage with an apartment above in 1922. In 1943, a building permit (Number J1785) was issued "to convert two garages into an apartment", which resulted in creating two dwelling units and eliminating the garage. No changes are proposed for this building. (Attachment B – Photographs).

The property owners obtained a permit to seismically retrofit the building and to rebuild the exterior staircase in 2007. Over the years, the building was restored and is in good condition.

## **ANALYSIS**

The applicant is proposing to construct a new, rear two-story addition to the primary residence, comprised of a 375 square foot ground floor addition and a new 824-square foot second story addition. The existing structure is a single-story residence. The proposed project requires the approval of the CHC because the proposed new construction is located on the second floor, is visible from the street, and exceeds 250 square feet of new area. To be granted approval, the project must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and meet the criteria for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness, including consistency with the Rose Park South Historic District Design Guidelines.

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant is proposing to construct a new 375 square foot ground floor addition located along the rear of the house. The new addition will measure approximately 29-feet in length and 25-feet in width. The new addition is proposed with a setback of five feet from the existing apartment building located in the rear of the property. The interior of the home will be reconfigured entirely. The new ground floor will consist of living room, kitchen, dining room, half bathroom, master bedroom with a master bathroom, an office and a covered patio.

A new second floor totaling 824-square feet of living area is also proposed. The second floor will be positioned over the new first floor rear addition and will extend 19-feet 9-inches over the existing portion of the home. The second floor will consist of two bedrooms, a den/sitting room and a bathroom (Attachment C – Plans).

The proposed second-floor addition is “L” shaped and features two roof systems. The proposed front facing gable roof system is off centered and measures 19-feet 2-inches in width by 19-feet 2-inches in length. A side gable roof system measures 25-feet 7-inches wide by 17-feet 8-inches in length and sits taller than the front portion. The new second story frontage would be set back approximately 18-feet 9-inches from the ground floor front elevation wall.

While the house exterior is in good condition, there is still structural damage to the building's exterior that needs to be corrected. The roof rafters need to be reinforced as the roof is failing, the porch floor is cracked, and the columns need to be realigned. The roof rafters are dry rotted and requires replacement. The applicant proposes to address these structural damage issues during project construction. Additionally, the applicant proposes to remove non-original stucco applied to the porch column bases to expose the original brick façade, remove the cracked walkway and install a new concrete walkway. The existing, period-appropriate ribbon driveway will be preserved. The applicant is proposing to install new 6-foot 6-inch wood fence across the driveway which will be located outside the required front yard setback. Brick pavers are proposed to be installed behind the new fence which will be screened from view of the public right-of-way.

The development standards of the R-2-N zoning district, in which the subject property is located, require a 15-foot front yard setback, a 4-foot side yard setback and a 20-foot rear yard setback. The addition will maintain code compliant setbacks, as the plans illustrate a 42-foot 2-inch front yard setback for the new second story, a 4-foot (west) side yard setback, a 20-foot 4-inch (east) side yard setback and a 45-foot 9-inch rear yard setback. The addition is proposed with a height of 24-feet 9-inches measured to the top of the roof, which is less than the maximum 25-feet height limitation.

The zoning code requires two enclosed parking spaces for each dwelling unit. The site is considered legal non-conforming as no parking exists on site currently. Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) Section 21.27.130 allows for expansion of living area for contributing properties in historic districts that have non-conforming parking through approval of a granting of a Certificate of Appropriateness<sup>1</sup>. This section of the code provides the ability to exempt historic properties from modern parking requirements to ensure that historic properties can be maintained or improved to accommodate contemporary needs while facilitating their preservation, in order to avoid new construction whose size or placement on a lot is out of character with existing historic structures or patterns of development in historic neighborhoods.

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<sup>1</sup> 21.27.130 - Historic landmark and landmark district exemption. Any building, structure, or lot designated as an historic landmark or contributing building, structure, or lot located within a designated landmark district established under Chapter 2.63 of this Code, shall be exempted from restrictions of this Chapter relating to restoration (Section 21.27.090), interior alteration to residential uses with nonconforming parking to create additional bedrooms (Section 21.27.065), expansion (Section 21.27.060), and maintenance (Section 21.27.040), provided that any use or construction plans are approved with a certificate of appropriateness issued in accordance with Chapter 2.63. (ORD-19-0028 § 7, 2019; Ord. C-7729 § 3, 2001; Ord. C-7663 § 5, 1999)

## DESIGN

The new addition will feature wood siding, wood windows and an 18-inch overhanging eave with exposed roof rafters. The roof system will consist of a front facing gable and a larger side facing gable. The new roof is proposed with a 4:12 slope which matches the existing roof slope.

The home retains the original wood windows which are comprised of different styles. The home features two tripartite picture windows with transoms, one on the front elevation and one on the (east) side elevation, a large picture window with transoms on the front elevation, a short, fixed window with grids, and several single and side-by-side, double hung, sash wood windows.

The applicant is proposing to maintain the existing larger decorative windows on the front (south) facing elevation and the side (west) facing elevation. Under the proposal, many of the existing windows on the west elevation would be removed and replaced with new wood windows in new smaller openings. A larger double hung window would be replaced with a shorter, fixed window with grids on the west elevation. The intention is to match the original window on the east elevation. The applicant cites the purpose of resizing the windows on the west elevation is to mitigate exterior noise.

The new addition would feature a tripartite picture window, several, double hung, wood windows in single and side by side configurations, casement windows, and an additional short window with grids. Two modern sliding glass doors and a double French door are proposed at the rear of the addition.

## COMPATIBILITY

The proposed project as proposed does is not consistent with Secretary of Interior Standards and is not fully compatible with the Craftsman architectural style. The proposed second story addition would be highly visible from the public right-of-way and as designed. The addition of a second story in and of itself is not incompatible with the historic district, since many of the existing buildings, contributing and non-contributing, within the neighborhood and in the historic district feature second stories. Likewise, removal and resizing of existing wood windows on the east and west elevations is inconsistent with historic standards and guidelines which encourage retention of character-defining features; as such, staff is recommending several modifications in order to achieve greater compatibility.

The Rose Park South Design Guidelines state: "An upper story addition may be acceptable for a single-story property, provided that it is sensitively designed and not highly visible from the public right-of-way... The size and massing of the upper story addition should be compatible with the historic character of the residence. The addition should not envelop or be larger overall than the existing building and should be no wider than the existing footprint. The addition should reasonably blend with and complement the existing pitch and shape of the roof. "

As currently designed, the second-floor addition appears large and bulky in relation to the single-story existing home and is highly visible from the street. To address this massing, it is

recommended that the second-floor addition be slightly reduced in overall size. Specifically, it is recommended that the front facing gable roof system, which sits over the existing house, be recessed back, and narrowed to preserve more of the character of the existing house, including the spatial relationships and prominence of the existing home's front elevation and to ensure there is no diminution of its historic significance.

The Rose Park South Historic District Ordinance states that: "(a) Additions shall be compatible in materials and design, and shall be subordinate in scale, to the existing building and (b) Important architectural features which define the character of the historic style shall not be removed or obscured. These include roofs and rafter tails, exterior cladding, historic wood sash windows on the façade or sides of the house, porch supports, original doors, and other original structural and decorative features."

In general, the proposed addition is compatible with the Rose Park South Historic Ordinance as it was designed to match the exterior features currently found on the existing house, which include a gable roof system, exterior wood siding, and wood windows. The addition features matching wood siding, wood windows and a varied gable roof system. However, the applicant has proposed to modify many of the original windows on the existing structure. Generally, original windows and window openings are to be preserved. The two side by side double hung windows on the east elevation are proposed to be removed and replaced with a smaller single hung window. Staff is not supportive of this modification and is recommending that these windows be preserved in place. Furthermore, many of the windows openings on the west elevation are proposed to be modified to lessen noise impacts generated from the vehicles from the driveway of the adjacent property. Staff is not supportive of replacing the larger double hung sash windows, resizing the original window openings, and installing a shorter window. Staff is recommending that the double hung, sash wood window be preserved in place as these windows are highly visible from the right-of-way.

The proposed windows on the second-floor addition appear to be positioned proportionately higher on the wall elevation, which is a departure from the placement of the windows on the original house. Staff recommends that these windows be lowered to better match the positioning of the windows on the existing house to maintain greater consistency and uniformity.

Furthermore, the addition is proposed with shorter eave overhangs than the eaves found on the existing house. To achieve greater consistency with the Craftsman architecture style and to meet the intent of the Rose Park South Historic District Ordinance, it is recommended that the overhangs for the new addition maintain 24-inch wide overhangs to match the eave overhangs on the original house.

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard No. 9 states that "new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features..." As proposed, the second-floor addition appears too large and bulky for the smaller existing house. To address the massing of the second floor, it is recommended that the front facing gable roof system be reduced in overall size to preserve more of the

character of the existing house and to retain its historic value. Though the addition is compatible, it is differentiated by the side gable roof line and window placement and orientation.

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard No. 10 states that "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 new second story addition would be structurally integrated into the design of the primary dwelling. However, with the reduction in size of the second story proposed by staff, the second-floor addition would be located above the new addition on the ground floor, thus maintaining more of the roof structure of the original house.

While the addition to the first story (375 square feet) does not present conflicts with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, the massing and visibility of the second story (824 square feet), as proposed by the applicant, does represent a substantial change to the historic property. However, reducing the size of the second story addition and setting it further back from the front would achieve greater compatibility with the intent of the Standards, the Rose Park Historic District Design Guidelines and Ordinance.

With the design modifications and the preservation of the original windows described above and as conditioned, the project would be compatible with the Rose Park South Historic District Ordinance, the Rose Park South Design Guidelines and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The addition, as modified, would be more proportional to the size and scale of the existing house. With the modifications proposed by Staff, the project would better maintain the historic spatial relationships and prominence of important historic features on the property. The revised proposal would be more compatible with the historic district and neighborhood as a whole.

Conditions of approval have been incorporated to address the reduction of the second-floor overall size and massing, to address new window placement, eave overhang size and the preservation of original windows. With conditions, the new addition will be compatible in size, mass, and scale to the existing buildings within the district.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

We received one letter opposition with specific concerns regarding massing and disruption to the district and several letters in support of the project (Attachment D - Public Comments).

### **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, the Rose Park South Historic District Ordinance and the Rose Park South Design Guidelines. With the added conditions, staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for to construct a new 375

square foot ground floor addition and a new second floor addition to the rear of an existing single-story residence. As conditioned, 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 (Attachment E – Findings). Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, subject to the conditions of approval (Attachment F – Conditions of Approval).

### **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**

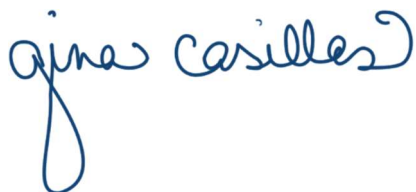
A total of 1146 public notices were distributed on June 25, 2021. As of this date, one letter was received in response to this project.

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Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

- Attachment A - Vicinity Map
- Attachment B - Photographs
- Attachment C - Plans
- Attachment D - Public Comments
- Attachment E - Findings
- Attachment F - Conditions of Approval