

M E M O R A N D U M

CITY PLANNING DIVISION

**PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
CITY OF SANTA MONICA**

DATE: July 9, 2007

TO: The Honorable Landmarks Commission

FROM: Planning Staff

SUBJECT: **Item 9B. Certificate of Appropriateness 07CA-004
2617 ½ Third Street, Santa Monica**

Design approval for a proposed addition to a Non-Contributing accessory structure located at 2617 ½ Third Street, a property located within the Third Street Neighborhood Historic District.

APPLICANT: Mark Woollen
PROPERTY OWNER: Mark Woollen

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The applicant requests design approval for a proposed 1,272 square foot addition¹ to an existing two-story, Non-Contributing Structure located on the rear half of the property at 2617 Third Street. The subject property is located within the formally-adopted Third Street Neighborhood Historic District.

The property at 2617 3rd Street is located on the east side of 3rd Street between Ocean Park Boulevard and Hill Street in the Third Street Neighborhood Historic District. The 7,500 square foot parcel contains an existing single-family residence that is a Contributing Structure to the Historic District. The one-story, primary Turn-of-the Century residence at 2617 3rd Street was constructed in 1905. The 1,148 square foot detached, Non-Contributing Structure located on the rear half of the lot was constructed in 1946.

The subject Certificate of Appropriateness application was filed on April 16, 2007 and was initially scheduled for the May 2007 Landmarks Commission agenda. At staff's request, the public hearing was rescheduled for the June 2007 meeting in order to allow the City's historic preservation consultant to review the proposed project.

The Landmarks Commission opened the public hearing for the application on June 11,

1. The original proposal reviewed by the Landmarks Commission in June 2007 included a 1,346 SF addition.

2007 and, after an extensive discussion regarding the proposal, the hearing was continued to allow the applicant to revise the project based on specific direction provided by the Commission during the course of the discussion.

Staff has analyzed the project revisions in light of the Commission's direction to the applicant and has also revised the recommended project conditions and draft findings as necessary to reflect the current proposal.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of this hearing was provided as required by Section 9.40.040(b) as follows: notice sent to all owners and occupants within a 300-foot radius of the subject property and to all owners and occupants of properties within the adopted Third Street Neighborhood Historic District boundaries; a newspaper notice was published in the Santa Monica Daily Press at least 10 days prior to the hearing date. Project plans and application materials were mailed to the Third Street Neighborhood Historic District Citizen Participation Committee within 5 days of application filing.

A set of revised architectural plans and renderings was provided to the Third Street Neighborhood Historic District Citizen Participation Committee on July 3, 2007.

CEQA STATUS

The project is categorically exempt from the provisions of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15303, Class 3 and Section 15331, Class 31 of the State Implementation Guidelines in that the project consists of modifications to a non-contributing residence that has been designed in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995), *Weeks and Grimmer*.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS

Analysis of Project Revisions

At the June 11, 2007 hearing, a majority of the Landmarks Commission expressed satisfaction with overall design concept for the project and the architect's use of a modern architectural vocabulary to implement modifications to the non-contributing structure located on the subject property.

The Commission also expressed several concerns about the project and directed the applicant to study the proposal further and revise plans with consideration to the following in order to better respond to the context of the District:

- Reevaluate the perceived massing and height of the structure; in particular address the proposed treatment of the second-story cantilevered volume and its proximity to

the historic bungalow on site and its north elevation as viewed from the street.

- Reevaluate and refine the use of color (utilize a more earth-toned color palette).
- Reevaluate and refine the use of materials and textures (consider incorporating natural wood elements).
- Reevaluate the location of the roof deck.
- Reevaluate the proposed 8'-0" perimeter block wall.

The applicant has made a series of revisions to the project design based on the Commission's direction. The following discussion contains a summary of each of the proposed revisions:²

- The revised project proposal consists of a 1,272 square foot one- and two-story addition to the existing two-story, non-contributing accessory structure located on the rear 30'-0" of the subject property (50' x 150'). The revised plan includes a 414 square foot first floor addition and an 858 square foot second-floor addition. This represents a 74 square foot reduction of proposed second-story floor area.
- The applicant is no longer proposing an 8'-0" block wall along the north, south and east property lines; accordingly, this item has been removed from the project plans. The design of the new wooden gate at the end of the driveway has not changed from the previous submittal.
- The proposed roof deck has been relocated to the south building volume and the photovoltaic panels have been shifted to the roof of the north building volume (see Sheet A-1.1). The relocated roof deck is now positioned at a lower height than the previous plan, and the projecting stair tower has and 42" glass guardrails have been eliminated from the plan. The size of the roof deck has been reduced from 304 square feet to 276 square feet.

The section north building volume where the roof deck was previously proposed has been reduced in height by one foot and no longer steps back in height toward the east property line (see North Elevation on Sheet A-3.1). This revision is significant in that it allows this portion of the structure to read as one volume at the same height, instead of two volumes that step up and increase in height. The elimination of the stair tower and 42" guardrail from this volume help to further reduce the perceived massing and scale of the structure from both the street and the from the property to the north. In addition, this revision effectively lowers the profile of the

² For the purposes of describing the different areas of the building, the terms "north building volume" and "south building volume" will be used. The north building volume refers to the portion of the structure that approximately encompasses the north elevation and the existing, rectangular building footprint. The south building volume refers to the portion of the building that encompasses the south elevation and which includes the cantilevered volume.

structure and better responds to the scale of neighboring buildings.

- Revisions to the north elevation include a relocated ground floor entrance that is now positioned on the corner of the north elevation and recessed two feet further into the living area, and a new first-story clerestory window. Both of these modifications to the plan serve to create more visual interest and articulation and break up the perceived massing of this the building elevation.
- The cantilevered portion of the south building volume has been reduced in size; the cantilevered portion has been scaled back by two feet. This revision serves to create more open space between the proposed addition to the non-contributing building and the existing historic bungalow.
- The entire second-story cantilevered portion of the south building volume now is proposed to be clad with natural wood siding (see Page 9 of the bound photo renderings). The natural wood siding would be stained dark grey so that the grain of the wood would still be visible. The use of wood siding is an important project improvement that addresses the need to incorporate materials that respond to the context of the District and the neighboring buildings. The wood siding also provides a depth of texture that helps to reduce the perceived massing of this portion of the building and also helps to create a more consistent visual rhythm to the property as viewed from the street and from the property to the south.

The applicant has worked with staff to review two different schematic plans regarding the treatment of the proposed wood siding on the south building volume. At the request of staff, the applicant provided, as a second option, renderings of the project showing the cantilevered volume with clear stained, natural redwood siding. This option was prepared in addition to the formal submittal showing the wood siding stained in with dark grey color palette.

After careful evaluation of the option for clear stained wood siding on the cantilevered portion of the building, staff does not recommend this treatment of the wood cladding. After further consideration, the clear stained siding does not appear to be appropriate for the rear accessory building because it would visually compete with the historic bungalow on the site and would not provide the more visually 'quiet' background that is most respectful of this context.

Finally, as previously proposed, the color palette for the exterior stucco finishes consist of light grey with dark grey accents. The applicant no longer proposes the use of white paint for the cantilevered portion. The current submittal proposes to stain the wood cladding a dark grey that would allow the natural wood grain to show through the color treatment.

Staff believes that color is a very important component of this project. In response to the Commission's direction regarding reevaluation of the use of color for the project, staff has carefully evaluated the currently-proposed applicant's light- and dark-grey color palette. Although the applicant has eliminated the white paint color from the project palette, this

does not appear to fully address the Commission's concerns regarding color. After researching historic paint color palettes, driving the neighborhood, and the studying the context of the project site – both in terms of its setting at the base of a hill with mature landscaping and its relationship to neighboring buildings – staff recommends a revised color palette (see Attachment A).

The attached color palette is not intended to recommend the exact color samples indicated for the project. Rather, the staff recommended palette is meant to show the type and range of colors that appears to be more appropriate for the project. The samples consist of a warmer shade of green with a bronze undertone and a grey-brown shade, also with a bronze undertone. This recommended palette of colors appears to better respond to the character of the District and also draws from the colors found in adjacent properties. Further, these colors respond to the site's location and create a better balance with the landscaping than currently-proposed grey palette.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In reviewing the revised plans, staff finds that the applicant has made appropriate revisions that have resulted in a project that better demonstrate compliance with the Design Guidelines and address the Commission's specific direction provided at the June 11, 2007 hearing. As a condition of approval, it is recommended that the applicant revise the color palette based on staff's recommendation and submit for review and approval to the Landmarks Commission Secretary the final color palette for the project prior to issuance of a building permit. Based on the foregoing, it is recommended that the Landmarks Commission approve Certificate of Appropriateness 07CA-004 per the following draft findings and conditions:

FINDINGS

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FINDINGS (SMMC 9.40.030)

1. The proposed project for an addition to the non-contributing structure located on the property located at 2617 Third Street is included within the list of work enumerated in Section 9.40.020(b).
2. The proposed modifications and addition to the Non-Contributing building located at the rear of the property at 2617 Third Street work have been designed in a manner that demonstrates that a reasonable effort has been made to produce compatibility with the District character as set forth in Section 9.36.290, and with the scale, materials and massing of the contributing structures within the District. Specifically, the proposed addition to the Non-Contributing rear building retains both the existing building's site lines from the street and its height. While the proposed addition does increase the footprint of the rear building, the character of the open space between the two buildings is maintained. The contemporary design of the addition clearly differentiates it from the historic residence on the front of the lot, yet it does not overwhelm the architectural character of the District because of its significant

setbacks from the street (over 90 feet back). The building footprint, streamlined form and massing, position on the parcel, and its minimal visibility from Third Street, allows the building appears to have little to no impact on the visual character and architectural experience of the District. The proposed addition appears to be designed to be compatible with but not duplicative of the existing structure, is compatible with the overall scale and proportion of the existing structure, utilizes, natural wood, stucco, and glass materials, and remains primarily hidden from the pedestrian's view from the street. As conditioned, the project incorporates a color palette that responds to its context both in terms of its setting at the base of a hill with mature landscaping and its relationship to neighboring buildings.

CONDITIONS

1. This approval is for proposed project at 2617 3rd Street as shown on plans dated June 26, 2007, which are on file in the City Planning Division, except as amended herein.
2. Prior to issuance of building permit, the applicant shall submit to the Landmarks Commission Secretary final paint color selections for review and approval.
3. This Certificate of Appropriateness shall be in full force and effect from and after the date of the rendering of the decision by the Commission. Pursuant to Landmarks Ordinance Section 9.36.170(h), this approval shall expire within one year if the authorized work is not commenced. Should the applicant be unable to comply with this restriction, an extension may be granted pursuant to Section 9.36.250 for an additional 180 days maximum. The applicant must request such an extension prior to expiration of this permit. After that time, the applicant will be required to return to the Commission for approval. In addition, this Certificate of Appropriateness shall expire if the authorized work is suspended for a 180-day period after being commenced.
4. This decision may be appealed by properly filing with the Director of Planning and Community Development a Notice of Appeal on a form furnished by the Planning and Community Department. Such notice shall be filed within a ten (10) day time period commencing from the date of the determination.
5. All required Planning and Building Permit approvals shall be obtained.

Attachments:

- A. Staff Recommended Color Palette for 2617 Third Street Project
- B. Additional Correspondence Received Regarding the Proposed Project
- C. Revised Architectural Plans and Photos