

M E M O R A N D U M

CITY PLANNING DIVISION

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

DATE: November 12, 2007

TO: The Honorable Landmarks Commission

FROM: Planning Staff

SUBJECT: **Item 8B. Certificate of Appropriateness 07CA-004
2617 ½ Third Street, Santa Monica**

Continued public hearing for Certificate of Appropriateness application requesting 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 1,213 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

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

historic preservation consultant to review the proposed project.

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

The Landmarks Commission reopened the public hearing and reviewed revisions to the proposed project on July 9, 2007. After further discussion the Commission again continued the public hearing for further design refinements.

The following discussion contains a brief summary of project revisions proposed by the applicant.

Please see Attachment A for additional correspondence submitted from members of the public regarding the pending application.

Please see Attachment B for excerpts from adopted Landmarks Commission Minutes for the June 11, 2007 and July 9, 2007 meetings.

Finally, Attachment C contains copies of the two previous staff reports prepared for the June 11, 2007 and July 9, 2007 public hearings.

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.

One set of revised architectural plans and renderings was provided to the Third Street Neighborhood Historic District Citizen Participation Committee on November 5, 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

First Public Hearing – June 11, 2007

At the first hearing to review the proposed project on June 11, 2007 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.
- Incorporate more references to the predominant architectural character of the District.

The Commission heard testimony from neighbors living in the District expressing significant concern over the proposal in terms of its scale, massing, architectural style, and materials. Members of the public also expressed the opinion that the project design does not meet the adopted Third Street Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

Second Public Hearing – July 9, 2007

In response to the Commission's direction outlined above, the applicant made a series of project revisions that were reviewed on July 9, 2007. Please refer to Attachment C for additional description about these previous revisions to the project design.

In summary, a majority of the Commission again stated that a modern structure could be constructed in a historic district; however, the non-contributing structure must be responsive to its context and not overwhelm the on-site or adjacent historic buildings. Several Commissioners again expressed support for the design concept but also suggested that the additional refinements were still necessary to incorporate the following:

- More references to the predominant architectural character of the District;
- Address the perceived massing and scale of the proposed addition to the existing Non-Contributing Structure; and

- Reexamine the relationship between the proposed addition and the historic bungalow on the parcel to ensure that the historic structure is not overwhelmed.

Project Revisions for Third Public Hearing – November 12, 2007

The applicant has made a series of revisions to the project design based on the Commission’s discussion in July. The following contains a brief *summary* of several of the most significant design modifications; please refer to the applicant’s narrative of project changes for a complete description of all revisions:²

Minimizing Visibility of Addition from the Street –

Scale and Massing

- The revised project proposal consists of a 1,213 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 453 square foot first floor addition and a 760 square foot second-floor addition (originally proposed at 414 square foot addition at the ground floor and 932 square feet at the second floor). This modest reduction in square footage serves to reduce the building mass at the second floor in order to further minimize the visibility of the existing accessory structure and its addition from the street.
- The height of the entire structure has been reduced by 1 ½ feet; the top of the roof at the north volume would be 1 ½ feet below the current height of the roof ridge of the existing Non-Contributing structure in order to further reduce its visibility from the street.
- The cantilevered portion of the south building volume has been further reduced in size; the width of the cantilevered portion has been reduced over three feet in width from 19’-2” to 16’-1”. This revision serves to further reduce its visibility from the street and create more open space in the backyard behind the existing historic bungalow.

References to the Predominant Architectural Character of the District –

Fenestration

- Amount of second floor glazing on the west-facing elevation has been reduced in order to refine the window to wall ratio and to reduce the amount of glazing visible from the street.
- The windows incorporated in the project design have been divided in order to better reflect the proportions found in architecture of adjacent historic bungalows.

² For the purposes of describing the different areas of the building, the terms “north building volume” and “south building volume” will continue to 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.

- Wood frames have been proposed around the windows in order to add a design element that complements and reflects the historic architecture in the District.

Building Materials

- Reclaimed redwood siding is now proposed on the second floor of the north volume. This siding will add a compatible material and textural element to the most visible portions of the structure as viewed from the street and from adjacent properties to the north and south. The profile of this siding will create a shadow line that reflects the clapboard siding found on Contributing Structures in the District.

Roof Overhangs

- The roof over the second floor of the north volume facing the street will project 1'-0" beyond the face of the building in order to reference a characteristic design element of historic bungalows in the District. In addition, the second floor windows on the street facing elevation of the north volume have been recessed 2'-0" in order to create more visual interest and articulation and to further break up the perceived massing of this portion of the building.

Neighbors' Comments

Attachment A contains correspondence from neighbors in the Third Street Neighborhood Historic District. The substance of the concerns expressed has not significantly changed since the project was last reviewed in July. Neighbors' feel strongly that the proposed project does not comply with the substance or spirit of the District Design Guidelines and that the scale, massing, materials, and architectural style of the proposal is inconsistent and incompatible with the District.

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 demonstrates compliance with the Design Guidelines and address the Commission's and neighbors' concerns expressed at both the June 11th and July 9th hearings.

Based on the entirety of the record, 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) and because it incorporates numerous references to the predominant architectural character of the District. These references include the use of two types of wood siding; wood frame fenestration that reflects the proportions of Contributing buildings in the District; and the incorporation of roof overhangs and recessed second floor windows facing the street that reflect the porch configurations found along the street. 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 siding, stucco, and wood frame windows, and also remains primarily hidden from the pedestrian's view from the street. In addition, 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 October 26, 2007, which are on file in the City Planning Division, except as amended herein.
2. 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.

3. 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.
4. All required Planning and Building Permit approvals shall be obtained.

Attachments:

- A. Correspondence
- B. Excerpts from June 11, 2007 and July 9, 2007 Landmarks Commission Meeting Minutes
- C. June 11, 2007 and July 9, 2007 Staff Reports
- D. Public Notice
- E. Revised Architectural Plans and Photos