



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

APPLICATION: Special Review

AGENDA ITEM: AR-1

PREPARED BY: Ili Lobaco
Associate Planner

MEETING DATE: February 25, 2015

SUBJECT: Special Review of Proposed Addition to a Single-family Home
118 North Alta Vista Avenue

APPLICANT: Michael DelaCruz
3579 E Foothill Blvd #102
Pasadena, CA91107

REQUEST: Review of proposed single-story addition to rear of house

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: Categorical Exemption (Class 31)
(Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation)

BACKGROUND: At the October 29, 2014 Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) meeting, the Commission reviewed a request to demolish the home at 118 North Alta Vista Avenue. At the meeting, the Commission voted to continue the item to a subsequent Special Meeting to allow a HPC subcommittee made up of Commissioners Zuk and Baker to research the inhabitants of the home.

At the December 3, 2014 Special Meeting of the HPC, the subcommittee reported that they were not able to find any information on previous occupants that would meet the level of significance required to apply Criteria #1. After much discussion, the Commission voted to approve the DPR form for the house with a Status Code of 5S3 with the determination that the architecture of the building was significant. Additionally, the Commission voted to establish a subcommittee of Commissioners Baker and Hendrix to work with the applicant to review and provide guidance for any proposed additions.

On February 4, 2015, the subcommittee met on site with the owner, representatives of the owner and City staff to review a proposal for a single-story addition to the rear of the home. The subcommittee will report on their on-site meeting with the owner and representatives.

DISCUSSION: The Historic Preservation Ordinance provides a process to review proposed changes to the exterior of houses that were determined to be Potential Historic Landmarks which were included on the list adopted by the City Council in Resolution No. 95-15. The provisions of the Code allow for the Historic Preservation Commission to review proposed exterior modifications on an advisory basis and to "assist and guide" the applicant with the proposed alterations to find solutions and direct the applicant toward appropriate changes that safeguard the architectural integrity of the structure.

Although the property at 118 North Alta Vista Avenue is not on the list of Potential Historic Landmarks, the adoption of the DPR by the Historic Preservation Commission with a California Historical Resource Status Code of 5S3 (appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation) raises the status of the property to a level consistent with our Potential Landmark list.

Where this proposal differs from the advisory review is in the application of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Any structure with a Status Code between 1 and 5 triggers the CEQA review process for any changes that are proposed to the structure.

CEQA does provide an exemption for projects that are determined to follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation. The Commission can make the determination that this project meets the (CEQA) Categorical Exemption of Class 31 (Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation) that:

Consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources 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.

According to current Tax Assessor information, the existing 982 square foot single-story residence was built in 1921 and has two bedrooms and one bathroom. The owner is proposing the construction of a 1,613 square foot single-story addition to the rear of the house. Additionally, the existing two-car garage will be demolished and an attached two-car garage will be built on the north side of the house.

The proposed exterior siding consists of a combination of both horizontal siding to match existing and board and batten vertical siding. The board and batten siding is being proposed to differentiate part of the addition and to also incorporate the board and batten siding that is currently found on the detached garage. Decorative elements in the gable areas will match the design found in the front facing gable. The home currently has a combination of both casement and fixed windows. Existing windows will be reused where possible and new windows will match existing windows. The existing chimney, which is stucco sided below the roofline and brick above the roofline, will be completely stucco plastered to match.

The only changes to the front will be the addition of steps to access the porch directly from the street. The addition of the steps will require cutting into the existing brick planter that is not part of the porch. The existing porch floor and posts will not be disturbed.

The Commission's focus of the review will be to determine if the addition is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation (attached). The proposed addition is a rehabilitation of the home whereby the property is "returned to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values. The addition will be single-story and to the rear of the home. Several of the Standards are met with the proposal including Standards #9 where the board and batten siding proposed will differentiate the old from the new construction and Standards #10 where the existing home will be preserved while the construction, if removed in the future, would not impair the integrity of the property.

RECOMMENDATION: Based on the review of the proposal and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Staff's determination is that the proposed addition follows the Standards.

The Commission's role is to provide guidance regarding the proposed addition and determine that it follows the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and that the project meets a CEQA Class 31 Categorical Exemption. If the Commission concurs with Staff's determination, the appropriate action would be a motion to:

Find that the request is categorically exempt from CEQA under Class 31