

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA

Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.

VIRTUAL MEETING

ROLL CALL

The meeting convened at: 6:32 pm

Commissioners Present: Mark Gallatin (Chair), Rebecca Thompson (Vice-Chair), Steven Friedman and Kristin Morrish

Commissioners Absent: William Cross

Staff Present: Kanika Kith (Planning Manager), Malinda Lim (Associate Planner)

Please Note: These Minutes are a summary of the meetings and are not a fully transcribed record.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approved 4-0.

DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

None.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. 657 Forest Avenue/Project No. 2342-COA/AUP – Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of an approximately 335 square-foot, single-story addition and a new 130 square-foot patio deck to an existing single-story single-family residence and an Administrative Use Permit to waive the second covered parking requirement:

Recommendation:

Approve, subject to Conditions of Approval.

Staff Presentation:

Planning Manager Kith introduced Preservation Planner Debi Howell-Ardila who played a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation of this project.

Questions for Staff:

Chair Gallatin and Debi Howell-Ardila discussed the front porch wall and the trellis. Chair Gallatin next inquired whether each of the conditions listed with regard to an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) need to be present. Planning Manager Kith will review the Code and get back to him. However, it is her understanding any one of the three Conditions is sufficient.

Public Hearing:

No comments were received.

Applicant's Presentation:

None. However, the Applicant is available to answer questions.

Questions for Applicant:

Vice-Chair Thompson remarked that the windows beside the master bedroom are very square and the rest of the house has windows that are very vertical in proportion, whether they are primary or secondary windows. She also commented on the crenellation on top, with red barrel tile trim, and the green vent. She confirmed that the trellis in front would remain.

Preservation Planner Debi Howell-Ardila and Vice-Chair Thompson discussed the trellis and porch as character-defining features given that the house is modest. They could be replaced in-kind if there is deterioration that is beyond repair.

Commissioner Morrish asked if the staff reviews all of the conditions with the property owner, including those conditions about videoing the street and videoing the sewer.

Planning Manager Kith replied that the conditions are shared with the applicant and are reviewed by them. If they have any opposition to the conditions, they can bring it up during the Commission meeting. The conditions referred to are standard conditions from the Public Works Department. She explained that this is to help Public Works and the applicant both be on the same page on the condition of the street prior to construction because there is a lot of concern about these construction projects damaging the existing residential streets from construction vehicles, and not being repaired properly.

Commissioner Discussion:

Vice-Chair Thompson is okay with the project. She wishes the north elevation was a little better defined for fenestration, for articulation and windows and the windows on the proposed south elevation looked more like the rest of the house.

Commissioner Friedman commented that the project is modest in scale and is appropriate for the neighborhood. He agrees with Vice-Chair Thompson's comments about the fenestration.

Commissioner Morrish had no concerns because it is so modest. She will defer to Vice-Chair Thompson on the fenestration.

Chair Gallatin agreed with his fellow Commissioners on the points that were brought up regarding the fenestration. He suggested that perhaps a condition of approval can be added to address that concern. He is very pleased to see that the porch and trellis are remaining in place because he didn't want to see that great bougainvillea bush get chopped down. It is a beautiful touch to the front of the home.

Planning Manager Kith provided clarification on the Administrative Use Permit for parking. According to the Code, the Commission has the authority to waive the second covered parking requirement and allow tandem parking, based on several criteria, and only one can apply. In this case, one could be because the property is substandard in size – less than 10,000 square feet - which this property is, or the property is substantial in width, which is less than 50 feet, which this property is, as well. This property is only 40 feet wide. Or the property contains the following features – a protected Heritage tree, a home listed in the City inventory of historic resources, or a physical feature that would make it impractical or unfeasible to provide the standard site garage. This section of the Code is the one that is referenced in the staff report.

Chair Gallatin conferred with Commissioner Friedman. Commissioner Friedman said he would read it as any of the three can be the basis.

Decision:

Commissioner Morrish motioned, seconded by Commissioner Friedman, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for this project at 657 Forest Avenue with the requisite mandatory findings with at least three project specific findings – specific findings numbers two, six and seven, approve it with the Conditions of Approval that are listed, and that we approve the Administrative Use Permit to waive the second covered parking space. Also, to request that the Applicant revisit the windows at the south elevation addition, with Chair review approval.

Motion carried, 4-0. The project is approved subject to the Conditions of Approval outlined in the staff report and as amended today.

2. **2010 Oxley Street/Project No. 2347-COA - Certificate of Appropriateness for a 408 square-foot single-story addition and alterations to an existing single-story home:**

Recommendation:

Approve, subject to Conditions of Approval.

Staff Presentation:

Planning Manager Kith reintroduced Preservation Planner Debi Howell-Ardila who played a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation of this project.

Questions for Staff:

Chair Gallatin inquired regarding an item included in the Conditions of Approval referencing the Smart Families Group, which is not relevant to this project. Planning Manager Kith confirmed that condition is in error and will be removed if the project is approved tonight with directions for staff to revise the Conditions of Approval.

Public Comments:

None.

Applicant's Presentation:

Associate Planner Malinda Lim played a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation by homeowners Jennifer and Marc Trotoux. Jennifer Trotoux is also a preservation professional for over 25 years.

Questions for Applicant:

Vice-Chair Thompson said this is one of the better designs we've seen in a long time. She thinks it is a really nice, humble, but adequate solution to adding more room to the house. She loves the idea in the back where they have the open framing trellis that is part of the gable. She thinks it's a wonderful solution and a modern riff on the gables that they have now.

Applicant Jennifer Trotoux responded that the detail has not yet been worked out yet.

Vice-Chair Thompson and the Applicant discussed moving the structural wall back to the envelope of the house. The Applicant said they decided to just put concrete and was told that it wouldn't really look any different because it was all going to be open lattice or something like that.

Commissioner Morrish had no questions, but she agrees that this is a great design.

Chair Gallatin wanted to clarify one item on the proposed front elevation on the west end of the front elevation regarding wood siding on the addition. The Applicant responded that the siding is shingles, not clapboard.

Commissioner Discussion:

Vice-Chair Thompson agreed with the owner that the massing is changing, the roofline is changing - that anthropologists 200 years from now will be able to figure it out.

Commissioner Friedman concurred that those features that Vice-Chair Thompson just described satisfy the need for differentiation. He thinks it is a very thoughtful design. He was concerned about the comments regarding the replacement of the cedar shingles, but he drove by and saw their condition, looked at the photographs, and he's comfortable with it.

Commissioner Morrish – no additional comments.

Chair Gallatin concurred with the owner's explanation regarding the shingles as a means of differentiation. He thought the Applicant is absolutely correct that the differentiation has been accomplished during the massing and does not see a need to have a different size shingle on the addition. The note on the plans could perhaps be modified or stricken from the plans when they are submitted for plan check.

Decision:

Commissioner Friedman motioned, seconded by Vice-Chair Thompson, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for 2010 Oxley Street, including the cleanup by staff of any and all erroneous conditions that were contained in the draft conditions in the agenda packet, and including all of the mandatory findings and design guideline findings, and at least specific findings two, six and eight.

Motion carried, 4-0. The project is approved, subject to the Conditions of Approval as amended today.

CONSENT ITEMS

3. October 29, 2019 Meeting Minutes
4. April 30, 2020 Meeting Minutes
5. May 14, 2020 Joint Meeting Minutes
6. May 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes
7. June 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes
8. July 16, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Decision:

Commissioner Friedman motioned, seconded by Chair Gallatin, to approve the above-referenced sets of minutes, with non-material corrections to be submitted by the Commission.

Motion carried, 4-0.

PRESENTATIONS

9. None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

10. 2020 Annual Report and 2021 Work Plan:

Recommendation:

1. Discuss and approve the 2020 Annual Report; and
2. Discuss and continue the Work Plan for 2021.

Staff Presentation:

Planning Manager Kith explained that the Annual Report is a brief snapshot highlighting the Commission's accomplishments this year and proposed Work Plan for next year for City Council. Staff is looking for the Commission to provide comments and suggestions to refine the Annual Report and approve it tonight. Staff will work with the Chair on any recommended changes the Commission requests, including the addition of the two items approved tonight, which will revise the number on page 5 from 13 to 15. For the Work Plan, staff requests the Commission provide suggestions and comments, and then continue it to the January meeting so that the new Commissioner is given the opportunity to review it.

Questions for Staff:

None.

Commissioner Discussion:

Chair Gallatin mentioned a possible addition to the Annual Report. Back in August, the Commission formed a subcommittee to consider a Landmark Designation for the house at 807 Bank Street and although no further action has been taken, it should be included in the accomplishments for the year since Landmark applications are not often received.

There were no comments regarding the Work Plan.

Decision:

Commissioner Friedman motioned, seconded by Vice-Chair Thompson, to approve the Annual Report, subject to Chair Gallatin's addition of Introductory Comments which will be included, and to continue the 2021 Work Plan to the Commission's next regular meeting.

Motion carried, 4-0.

ADMINISTRATION

11. Comments from City Council Liaison:

None.

12. Comments from Cultural Heritage Commissioners:

Vice-Chair Thompson commended staff on the wonderful job on summing up the year and projecting the work tasks and activities ahead. There was a lot of work done and she really appreciates their time putting together the Annual Report.

Commissioner Friedman was contacted by the City last week to inquire whether he was interested in having his name submitted to be recommended for serving an additional term on the Commission. Due to his workload, he felt that he could not balance the two, and he withdrew his name from consideration. Tonight is his last meeting. He wanted to thank the Commissioners and staff and especially, Kanika and Malinda for everything. He cherishes their leadership and devotion. Good luck to all and thank you.

Commissioner Morrish commended the staff for all the work they have done on this Commission and all the things going on in Planning. The staff is heroic. She thanked Commissioner Friedman for his service, as well.

Chair Gallatin extended a big thank you to Commissioner Friedman for his service. He joined the Commission four years ago and has been very impressed with Commissioner Friedman's abilities to calmly analyze the projects before the Commission and to make cogent arguments in favor of them in most cases or in some cases, where needed, amend them. He wishes the Commissioner nothing but the best going forward. Also, since this is the last meeting of the year, he wanted to extend a huge thank you to the staff – from Joanna to Kanika to Malinda to Aneli and Jose – all the way down the line – this has been a year unlike any other and they have risen to the challenge heroically.

13. Comments from Subcommittees:

None.

14. Comments from South Pasadena Preservation Foundation (SPPF) Liaison:

Chair Gallatin reported that SPPF continues to plan a virtual event honoring Irving Gill. It will probably be in the late spring sometime. As details are firmed up, they will be shared with the Commission.

15. Comments from Staff:

Planning Manager Kith thanked Chair Gallatin and all the Commissioners for their appreciation of staff. She lauded the strong support provided by Jose Villegas and Aneli Gonzalez. She added that she and Malinda have been helping applicants move through all the backlogs of projects which they are still processing. They have been really grateful that Council approved a consultant to help process the new projects, so property owners do not have to wait until the old projects are finished.

As outlined in the Work Plan, the Cultural Heritage Commission is going to have a heavy workload next year. In addition, the accessory dwelling unit ordinance will be in place. The Planning Department was awarded a grant from the State and will be working on this for most of the year next year. As soon as that is done, they will begin update of the Design Standards and Guidelines. The Planning Commission is going to be really busy with the Housing Element which will need to be included in the Design Standards for ADUs. The Planning Commission is trying to promote production of ADUs while trying to protect the character of the City.

Lastly, the hearing by SCAG for the RHNA Appeal for the City will be on January 11th. It was originally scheduled for January 6th.

Chair Gallatin added that the ad hoc Committee met with staff this morning to go over a PowerPoint presentation that was given about two weeks ago by SCAG's staff. It was an orientation to the appeal process. It provided an opportunity to get a first read on how SCAG staff is viewing the 50-plus appeals they received from the six County jurisdictions. It also helped us start to hone our strategy for when we go to our hearing on January 11th.

Chair Gallatin stated that it is going to be an uphill challenge for every city that has appealed.

Planning Manager Kith reported that the Seven Patios project approved back in November by the Planning Commission is going to be presented to City Council in February. In addition, the Planning Commission is working on inclusionary housing and looking at the density bonus. She invited any interested Commissioners to let staff know and they will be informed when the inclusionary ordinance is going before the Planning Commission – probably in January or February.

Chair Gallatin wished everyone a very happy holiday season.

ADJOURNMENT

16. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 pm to the next regular Cultural Heritage Commission meeting scheduled on January 21, 2021.

APPROVED,



Mark Gallatin
Chair, Cultural Heritage Commission

12-15-22

Date