



# *DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE*

## AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA DATE: AUGUST 5, 2015  
TO: Chair McCormick and Members of the Design Review Committee  
THRU: Leslie Aranda Roseberry, Planning Manager  
FROM: Kelly Christensen Ribuffo, Associate Planner  
SUBJECT: **DRC No. 4748-14 – La Russa Residence**

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### **SUMMARY**

The applicant proposes to construct a 413 square foot single story addition at the rear of a contributing building in the Old Towne Historic District. This project was brought forward as a preliminary review before the DRC on May 6, 2015.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION – FINAL DETERMINATION**

Staff recommends that the DRC approve the proposed project subject to conditions of approval contained in the staff report and any conditions that the DRC determines appropriate to support the required findings.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Applicant/Owner: Frank La Russa  
Property Location: 125 N. Cleveland Street  
General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential 2-6 du/ac  
Zoning Classification: R-1-6  
Existing Development: 1,085 SF one-story single family residence, 283 SF detached garage  
Property Size: 7,695 SF  
Associated Applications: None  
Previous DRC Review: 5/6/2015  
Previous Entitlements: None

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

No Public Notice was required for this project.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

**Categorical Exemption:** The proposed project will be categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines 15331 (Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation.) The project is limited to the rehabilitation of a

historical resource and will be in conformance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Secretary's Standards)* and the Old Towne Design Standards. There is no environmental public review required for a Categorical Exemption.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant proposes to construct a 413 square foot single story addition on the rear (east) elevation of a contributing building in the Old Towne Historic District. The proposed addition would add a master bedroom and bathroom as well as an extension to the existing kitchen. Due to the placement of the addition, it would not be directly visible from N. Cleveland Street. The existing site Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 0.117; the proposed FAR is 0.231. As proposed, the design of the addition meets the minimum development requirements for the R-1-6 zoning district.

The proposed addition spans the nearly full width of the building, with a longer 'L' shaped wing on the north side of the elevation. No portion of the addition roof extends above the ridge lines of the historic building. The north side of the addition follows the gable roofline of the existing building, while the south portion, which extends off the kitchen, has a shed roofline to give this portion of the building the scale and appearance of a service porch. The proposed cladding is wood lap siding, with a wider proposed reveal to differentiate it from the original historic siding. The wood double-hung windows in the addition will be trimmed with slightly different dimension trim to further differentiate it from the original structure.

The application for this project was originally submitted on May 1, 2014. Staff has been working with the applicant in order to bring the scope of the project in conformance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and the *Historic Design Standards for Old Towne*. Staff had concerns with the compatibility of the addition in the original proposal, and brought the plans before the DRC on May 6, 2015 for preliminary review and comment. All application materials received have been included as attachments to this report.

After the preliminary review, staff has continued to work with the applicant to incorporate the DRC's comments into the design of the addition. While overall the addition now meets the intent of the DRC's comments and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*, there appear to be drawing and rendering issues that continue to linger in the proposed plans. Staff has addressed these discrepancies in the Analysis section of this report and recommended conditions that would allow the project to continue forward to plan check.

## **EXISTING SITE**

The site is developed with a 1,085 square foot single family residence and a 283 square foot detached garage. The single family residence was constructed c. 1920 in the Craftsman Bungalow style. The detached garage was likely constructed around the same time as the residence. The property is a contributor to the National Register-listed Old Towne Historic District.

## **EXISTING AREA CONTEXT**

The subject property is surrounded to the north, east and west by other single family residences in the R-1-6 zoning district. Almost all of the properties fronting N. Cleveland Street are contributing resources to the Historic District. The south side of the property is bordered by the alley that runs parallel to E. Chapman Avenue, separating the residential properties from the commercial properties on the street.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Orange Municipal Code (OMC) Section 17.10.070 establishes the general criteria the DRC should use when reviewing the project. This section states the following:

The project shall have an internally consistent, integrated design theme, which is reflected in the following elements:

1. **Architectural Features.**
  - a. The architectural features shall reflect a similar design style or period.
  - b. Creative building elements and identifying features should be used to create a high quality project with visual interest and an architectural style.
2. **Landscape.**
  - a. The type, size and location of landscape materials shall support the project's overall design concept.
  - b. Landscaping shall not obstruct visibility of required addressing, nor shall it obstruct the vision of motorists or pedestrians in proximity to the site.
  - c. Landscape areas shall be provided in and around parking lots to break up the appearance of large expanses of hardscape.
3. **Signage.** All signage shall be compatible with the building(s) design, scale, colors, materials and lighting.
4. **Secondary Functional and Accessory Features.** Trash receptacles, storage and loading areas, transformers and mechanical equipment shall be screened in a manner, which is architecturally compatible with the principal building(s).

## **ANALYSIS/STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES**

### **Issue 1: Preliminary Review Comments**

The Committee provided the applicant with substantial feedback during the preliminary review for the project. The final meeting minutes are included as Attachment 5 of this report. Below is a summary of the main comments, and how the applicant's designer has addressed them in the revised design.

#### *Differentiation between Addition and House*

The DRC was concerned that there was a lack of a setback in the façade or other demarcation between the original portion of the house and the new addition, and that the amount of historic fabric that would be removed was in conflict with Standards #9 and #10 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

To address these concerns, the designer has incorporated the following design features:

- Offset the addition 2” from the north elevation and 1 foot from the south elevation
- Has provided for 6” wide siding on the addition, as compared to 3” on the original house
- Different window framing details

#### *Reuse of Historic Fabric*

The DRC wanted to see that important historic details of the building, such as the corbels and windows, be salvaged for reuse on the new addition where appropriate.

Three (3) original corbels will need to be removed from the rear elevation of the house as part of the addition. The applicant has not provided any notes stating that any historic fabric will be reused on the addition, and staff has provided a condition of approval requiring that the corbels, which as are important character defining feature, be salvaged and reused if possible.

#### *Design of the Kitchen Addition*

The Committee gave the applicant guidance on the design on the south portion of the addition. The preliminary design included a skirted dutch gable roof to accommodate a full width addition flush with the south side of the building. The DRC recommended that it would be appropriate to inset the addition from the south elevation and use a shed roof form to mimic a traditional Old Towne service porch.

In response, the applicant has inset the addition 1 foot from the south elevation and provided for a ¾” over 12 shed roof slope that will fit underneath the existing roofline of the building.

#### Issue 2: Rendering Errors

In reviewing the revised plans submitted by the applicant, the following drawing/rendering errors were identified:

#### *Driveway*

In addition to the work proposed for the residence, the property owner has also installed a new driveway, with a curb cut existing onto N. Cleveland Street. The driveway and curb cut did not require DRC review and have already been reviewed and approved by the Planning Division and Public Works. The driveway as shown in the plans included as Attachment 2 (Sheets A-2 and A-3) is out of date and reflects an older proposal for the driveway.

### **ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION**

None.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS**

The courts define a “Finding” as a conclusion which describes the method of analysis decision makers utilize to make the final decision. A decision making body “makes a Finding,” or draws a conclusion, through identifying evidence in the record (i.e., testimony, reports, environmental documents, etc.) and should not contain unsupported statements. The statements which support the Findings bridge the gap between the raw data and the ultimate decision, thereby showing the rational decision making process that took place. The “Findings” are, in essence, the ultimate conclusions which must be reached in order to approve (or recommend approval of) a project. The same holds true if denying a project; the decision making body must detail why it cannot make the Findings.

The Findings are applied as appropriate to each project. Below are the four findings that, as applicable, are used to determine whether a project meets the intent of the code related to design review and historic preservation guidelines:

1. *In the Old Towne Historic District, the proposed work conforms to the prescriptive standards and design criteria referenced and/or recommended by the DRC or other reviewing body for the project (OMC 17.10.070.F.1).*

The proposed project is in conformance with the Old Towne Design Standards. The mass and scale of the addition are appropriate for the size of the residence. Based on the preliminary feedback from the DRC design features have also been integrated to differentiate the addition from the original portion of the house. The proposed addition will not have an adverse impact on the historic integrity of the property or the character of the surrounding Old Towne Historic District.

2. *In any National Register Historic District, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior’s standards and guidelines (OMC 17.10.07.F.2).*

The proposed project is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, specifically Standards #9 and #10 related to the compatibility of new additions to historic properties. The addition is subordinate to the original house, there is a clear distinction between original fabric and the addition, and if removed the original form of the house could be reconstructed.

3. *The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of an internally consistent, integrated design theme and is consistent with all adopted specific plans, applicable design standards, and their required findings (OMC 17.10.07.F.3).*

With the conditions recommended by Staff, the proposed work conforms to the prescriptive standards and design criteria set forth in the Old Towne Design Standards and Orange Municipal Code. The addition design is consistent in scale and massing with the existing historic building, with small modifications made to the design to differentiate it from the historic house.

4. *For infill residential development, as specified in the City of Orange Infill Residential Design Guidelines, the new structure(s) or addition are compatible with the scale, massing, orientation, and articulation of the surrounding development and will preserve or enhance existing neighborhood character (OMC 17.10.07.F.4).*

The Infill Design Guidelines are not applicable to this project, as the size of the addition is less than 50% of the existing square footage of the house.

At this time staff has no recommendation regarding the proposed project, and is only looking for preliminary feedback regarding the application.

### **RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

The approval of this project is subject to the following conditions:

1. All original corbels on the rear elevation of the building shall be salvaged for reuse on the gable roof of the new rear elevation.
2. Before building permit submittal, one set of revised architectural plans shall be submitted to the Planning Division for review so that staff may verify that all rendering and drawings errors have been corrected, as follows:
  - a. Sheets A-3 and A-4 shall be corrected to show the correct configuration of the driveway on the site.
3. This project is approved as a precise plan. All work shall conform in substance and be maintained in general conformance with plans and exhibits labeled as Attachment 2, including modifications required by the conditions of approval, and as recommended for approval by the Design Review Committee. Any changes from the approved plans shall be subject to subsequent review and approval by the Design Review Committee.
4. The applicant agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the City, its officers, agents and employees from any and all liability or claims that may be brought against the City arising out of its approval of this permit, save and except that caused by the City's active negligence.
5. Construction permits shall be obtained for all future construction work, as required by the City of Orange, Community Development Department's Building Division. Failure to obtain the required building permits will be cause for revocation of this permit.
6. If not utilized, project approval expires twenty-four months from the approval date. Extensions of time may be granted in accordance with OMC Section 17.08.060. The Planning entitlements expire unless Building Permits are pulled within 2 years of the original approval.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Vicinity Map
2. Existing and Proposed Plans (date stamped July 29, 2015)
3. Staff Photographs taken 4/30/2015
4. Applicant Photographs taken 7/15/2015
5. Final Minutes for the May 6, 2015 Design Review Committee Meeting
6. Color Samples (to be provided at meeting)

cc: Frank La Russa  
125 N. Cleveland Street  
Orange, CA 92866  
[Flarussa1@att.net](mailto:Flarussa1@att.net)

Terry Newland  
Newland Construction, Inc.  
428 S. Montgomery Way  
Orange, CA 92868  
[terry@newlandconstruction.com](mailto:terry@newlandconstruction.com)