



Staff Report and Recommendations Agenda of May 9, 2022, Item 7a

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency

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I. APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER:

Applicant/Property Owner: Jose Hernandez
121 G Street
Oxnard, CA 93030

II. REQUEST:

A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) (Ventura County Cultural Heritage Ordinance [CHO] Section 1366) for a two-story rear addition of 1,019 square feet to an existing one-story, single-family dwelling located at 121 G Street, Oxnard, CA 93030 (Henry T. Oxnard Historic District and Landmark Area #161) (Case No. CH22-0010).

III. LOCATION AND PARCEL INFORMATION:

121 G Street, Oxnard, CA 93030
Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 202-0-030-410
Historic Designation: Historic District and Landmark Area
Common/Historic Name: n/a

The subject property consists of approximately 0.16 acres within the Henry T. Oxnard Historic District and Landmark Area in the City of Oxnard and currently contains an existing 910 square-foot residence, a 231 square-foot detached accessory dwelling unit, and a 540 square-foot detached garage.

IV. PROJECT SCOPE:

The proposed project involves remodeling of the interior and exterior of the existing 910 square-foot residence, including a 274.9 square-foot remodel and a 1,019 square-foot second floor addition, for a total of 1,929 square feet of habitable space. The views of the main residence from the public right of way are proposed to change substantially with the addition and increase of the overall height of the residence to 25 feet. The proposed design reflects some aspects of the Mediterranean-style bungalow architectural style and matches some character-defining features such as the tile roof and stucco exterior. Proposed windows consist of aluminum-clad, single-hung and slider windows to match existing, non-original windows found elsewhere on the existing residence. Refer to Exhibit 1 – Proposed Plans and Exhibit 2 – Photos and Window Details for full project details and specifications.

V. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

The subject property was documented in the *1981 Oxnard - Santa Paula Historic Resources Survey (Phase I Part II)* (“Survey”) (Exhibit 3 – Survey Evaluation) prepared by Ms. Judith P. Triem. The residence is described as a Mediterranean style bungalow with a triple-arched front porch. It was built around 1926 for Harry W. Johnson, Chief of Police and City Tax Collector. It has a clay tile roof with a vented tower over the arched entry and a porch with a low wall enclosure and pergola.

VI. CHO ANALYSIS:

The Ventura County Cultural Heritage Ordinance (CHO) Section 1366 requires that the Cultural Heritage Board issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for an application to construct, change, alter, modify, remodel, remove, or significantly affect a County Landmark.

CHB Staff has determined that the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (SOI Standards)¹ may be helpful to the CHB in conducting its analysis of the subject property. Additionally, the National Park Service’s *Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Building: Preservation Concerns*² may be of use during the CHB’s review. CHB Staff has determined the standards for rehabilitation are appropriate for this request and evaluated the proposed scope of work against the relevant standards below.

Standards	Staff Comments
<p>#1 A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.</p>	<p>The subject property will continue to be used for residential purposes and the main residence will continue to be used as a residence.</p> <p>Staff determined this Standard has been met.</p>
<p>#2 The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.</p>	<p>The Secretary’s Standards³ encourage the retention of historic features that contribute to the interpretation of the significance of a historic property and, when appropriate, repair of materials and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing parts rather than full replacement.</p>

¹ National Park Service, *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>.

² National Park Service, *Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Building: Preservation Concerns*, August 2010, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/14-exterior-additions.htm>.

³ Weeks, Kay D., *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties: with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, revised 2017, pg. 140.

Standards	Staff Comments
	<p>The main residence would retain a majority of its character-defining features. The addition is proposed to be located at the rear and the primary façade is not proposed to be modified. A portion of the existing residence at the rear, including windows, is proposed to be removed to accommodate the addition. However, this is limited in scope and the main residence would appear to generally retain its historic character and materials.</p> <p>Staff determined this Standard has been met.</p>
<p>#3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.</p>	<p>Conjectural design features are not proposed to be added to the historic property (i.e. changes that are intended to make the new construction look more historic than it actually is).</p> <p>The proposed addition would continue the existing siding and roofing materials used on the main residence. Based on this, the proposed addition would be similar in character to the house but will be differentiated using contemporary building materials.</p> <p>Staff determined this Standard has been met.</p>
<p>#4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.</p>	<p>There do not appear to have been changes to the property that have gained significance in their own right.</p> <p>Staff determined this Standard has been met.</p>
<p>#5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.</p>	<p>The main residence would retain a majority of its character-defining features. The addition is proposed to be located at the rear and the primary façade is not proposed to be modified. A portion of the existing residence at the rear, including windows, is proposed to be removed to accommodate the addition. However, this is limited in scope and the main residence would appear to generally retain its historic character and materials.</p> <p>Staff determined this Standard has been met.</p>
<p>#6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where</p>	<p>Staff determined this Standard is not applicable to the proposed scope of work.</p>

Standards	Staff Comments
<p>the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.</p>	
<p>#7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.</p>	<p>No such treatments are currently proposed. Therefore, Staff determined this Standard is not applicable to the proposed scope of work.</p>
<p>#8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.</p>	<p>Staff determined this Standard is not applicable to the proposed scope of work.</p>
<p>#9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.</p>	<p>A new addition is most appropriately located where its visibility from the primary views of the historic building is minimized.⁴ This is often a rear or obscure elevation. Inherent in all of the guidance is the concept that an addition needs to be subordinate to the historic building. The size, scale, and massing of a new addition all pertain to the addition’s overall volume and three-dimensional qualities.⁵ Taken together, size, scale and massing are critical elements for ensuring that a new addition is subordinate to the historic building, thus preserving the historic character of a historic property.⁶</p> <p>The existing main residence is a Mediterranean-style bungalow of approximately 13 feet in height. The proposed addition would more than double the amount of habitable square footage, from 910 square feet to 1,929 square feet, and increase the maximum height of the structure to 25 feet. Based on this, the views of the main residence from the public right of way are proposed to change substantially. It should be noted that the residence</p>

⁴ National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, “New Additions to Historic Buildings,” <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/successful-rehab/additions.htm>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

Standards	Staff Comments
	<p>immediately south of the subject property contains an existing, two-story, rear addition, although an approved Certificate of Appropriateness could not be located.</p> <p>The exterior of the addition would be in keeping with the architectural style of the main residence. However, the design of the proposed addition would follow and extend along the northern wall plane of the existing residence, and enlarge and extend the southern wall plane, risking unification of the two volumes into a single architectural whole. Moreover, the main residence would be substantially insubordinate to the proposed addition.</p> <p>In some cases, separating the addition from the historic building with a simple, small-scale architectural hyphen⁷ or connector can reduce the visual impact of large addition to a historic building.⁸ Another way of minimizing the impact of a new addition to an historic building is to offset it or step it back from the mass of the historic building. It is important that the new structure is clearly differentiated and distinguishable as a new addition so that the identity of the historic structure is not lost altogether in a new and larger composition.⁹ The historic building must be clearly identifiable and its physical integrity must not be compromised by the new addition.</p> <p>Based on these considerations, the proposed addition appears inconsistent with this Standard.</p>
<p>#10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.</p>	<p>The design of the proposed addition extends the wall plane of the existing building and risks unification of the two volumes into a single architectural whole. Such a design may preclude the ability to remove the addition in the future while maintaining the essential form of the residence as</p>

⁷ A hyphen is defined as the connecting link between a main building and an outlying wing. (*Dictionary of Architecture*).

⁸ National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, “New Additions to Historic Buildings,” <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/successful-rehab/additions.htm>.

⁹ Ibid.

Standards	Staff Comments
	the identity of the historic structure may be lost in a new and larger composition. Based on these considerations, the proposed addition appears inconsistent with this Standard.

VII. STAFF CONCLUSION:

Based on the above considerations, the proposed scope of work appears partially consistent with the Secretary’s Standards. Following implementation of the project, the residence would retain distinctive features of its Mediterranean bungalow style. However, of notable exception, the proposed addition risks unification of the two volumes into a single architectural whole. Moreover, the main residence would be substantially insubordinate to the proposed addition.

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VIII. OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW HARDSHIP:

At the CHB public hearing on this matter, if desired, the property owner is provided the opportunity to present facts and evidence demonstrating a failure to grant the requested COA would cause an economic hardship as provided by CHO §1366-3(d).

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comment regarding this item has been received to date.

X. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

Pursuant to CHO Section 1366, the CHB may identify project modifications for the applicant’s review and consideration. Staff is recommending the CHB take the following actions regarding the request:

1. **CONDUCT** public hearing, **RECEIVE** oral and written testimony, and **CONSIDER** the Planning Division Staff report and all exhibits and attachments hereto;
2. **FIND** that the proposed project, with any project modifications determined necessary, meets the requirements of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*;
3. **FIND** that the proposed project will not adversely affect and will be compatible with the use and exterior of the site, in accordance with Ventura County Cultural Heritage Ordinance Section 1366-3(b);
4. Based on the preceding evidence and analysis, **APPROVE** the Certificate of Appropriateness (CHO Section 1366) with any project modifications determined necessary to conform to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* and CHO Section 1366-3(b).

Prepared by:



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Reviewed by:



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Exhibits:

- Exhibit 1 – Proposed Plans
- Exhibit 2 – Photos and Window Details
- Exhibit 3 – Survey Evaluation