



Agenda Report

18-979

Agenda Date: 9/6/2018

REPORT TO HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Public Hearing: Consideration of a Significant Property Alteration Permit to legalize a rear addition to the existing residence, and allow the demolition of an existing garage and construction of a detached accessory dwelling unit (ADU) at a Mills Act property located at 1415 Benton Street

BACKGROUND

[The applicant filed a Significant Property Alteration (SPA) Permit application on June 6, 2018 as required under the Historic Preservation Ordinance (HPO), Chapter 18.106 of the Zoning Code. The project includes the demolition of an existing 230 square-foot detached garage structure and the construction of a 631 square-foot accessory unit. The subject property is located on the northwest corner of Benton Street and Madison Street and is currently listed on the City's Historical Resource Inventory (HRI) and has a Mills Act contract, which was established in 1998. The residence was constructed in approximately 1895 in a vernacular cottage style with Greek Revival elements.

During the 2017 Mills Act Contract audit, the current property owner Michael Eschrich provided the attached letter dated November 25, 2017 (Attachment 6) detailing the restoration work that has occurred to the residence to date and updating information previously provided about the asbestos containing siding and foundation work.

An updated historic resource survey (DPR 523) was prepared by architectural historian Richard Brandi and is attached for reference (Attachment 2). The report finds that the garage is of unknown construction date and does not appear to be historically significant.

During staff's review of the proposal, it was determined that an existing rear shed roof addition made to the between 1987 and 1993 was completed without benefit of permits. This determination is based on a review of permit records, Sanborn maps, and aerial maps (the 1987 aerial does not show shed roof addition, while the 1993 map shows it). As the addition was done without benefit of permit and without review in association with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, staff recommended that the applicant incorporate the legalization of the rear addition into the pending application.

DISCUSSION

Pursuant to Section 18.106.050 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, significant alterations to a HRI property, as well as the addition of an accessory unit to an HRI property, constitutes a "major alteration" and requires a SPA Permit. In this case, the HLC shall make a recommendation to the Community Development Director who shall render a decision on the SPA permit.

As noted above, the property's Mills Act Contract was approved in 1998 (Attachment 4). The historic resource survey prepared at that time did not mention the rear addition, but did note a small wooden

detached garage located to rear of the residence. The report did not expressly identify the garage as a contributing factor to the residence's historic value. In addition, none of the items identified in the original 10 Year Plan relate to the rear addition or the garage structure. The garage is proposed to be demolished in order to provide space for the proposed accessory unit.

The more recent historic resource survey (Attachment 2) prepared by Architectural Historian Richard Brandi reaffirms the residence's historic integrity and value. However, the report concludes that the garage appears to be of later construction as it is not present in the 1915 Sanborn map and does not appear to be historically significant.

In a separate memo, Mr. Brandi reviewed the integrity of the shed roof addition to the rear of the residence (Attachment 3). The memo notes that the shed roof addition was in place when the previous owners entered into the Mills Act Contract in January 1998. The memo concludes that as long as there are no visible changes to the exterior of the addition from the public right of way, there is no impact to the historic significance of the house and it remains a historic resource. The addition was found to be compatible with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings (Attachment 4) in that the addition was undertaken in a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired. The applicant is proposing a small 31 square-foot addition to the shed roof area on the west side of the house away from the public right of way.

Pursuant to Section 18.12.030 of the Zoning Ordinance, accessory units are permitted in the R-1-6L Zoning District. Based on the subject site's lot size, the site is eligible for a detached accessory unit of up to 1,200 square feet, subject to standard setback and lot coverage limitations. However; because the site is an HRI property, the HPO supersedes this code and the HLC can make recommendations about the size and design of the ADU based on compatibility with the main house.

The applicant proposes a 1,078 square-foot detached accessory unit on the Madison Street site frontage (539 square feet above ground and 539 square-foot basement). The parking lost as a result of the demolition of the garage would be replaced by the two car tandem driveway on Madison Street. All required setbacks and lot coverage limitations would be maintained. The proposed structure is 13 feet and 10 inches in height.

Based on the criteria set forward by the National Parks Service, the new construction of an ADU within the subject HRI property does not impact the integrity or significance of the main house in that viewsheds to the main house are maintained and the new ADU would be subordinate in size and design to the main house.

Conclusion

Based on the historic resource survey and evaluator's conclusion, there is no need to modify the shed roof addition to make it compatible with the house from a historic preservation standpoint. Building permits will be required to legalize the addition. The garage is not a contributing factor to the residence's historic status and does not appear to be historically significant in its own right. The ADU is small in scale and will not detract from the historical resource.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The scope of the proposed shed roof addition is exempt from CEQA environmental review requirements per CEQA Section 15331, Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation as the project

was found to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings.

The new ADU is exempt from CEQA environmental review requirements per CEQA Section 15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures. Based on the criteria set forward by the National Parks Service, the new construction of an ADU within the subject HRI property does not impact the integrity or significance of the main house.

PUBLIC CONTACT

The notice of public meeting for this item was posted at three locations within 300 feet of the project site and was mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the project site. No public comments have been received at the time of preparation of this report.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historical and Landmarks Commission finds that existing shed roof addition the construction of the new small ADU is compatible with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and does not have an adverse impact on the historical significance of the house; and find that the garage is not a contributing factor to the residence's historic status and therefore recommends approval of the shed roof addition and demolition of the existing garage and construction of a detached accessory unit at a Mills Act property located at 1415 Benton Street to the Director of Community Development.

Prepared by: Rebecca Bustos, Associate Planner

Approved by: Gloria Sciara, Development Review Officer

ATTACHMENTS

1. Project Data Sheet
2. 2018 Historic Resources Survey (DPR 523)
3. Shed Roof Addition Memo, Richard Brandi July 2018
4. Secretary of the Interior Standards for New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings
5. Historic Property Preservation Agreement with Attachments
6. Mills Act Contract Audit Response Letter
7. Development Plans