



Agenda Report

20-1329

Agenda Date: 1/2/2020

REPORT TO HISTORICAL AND LANDMARKS COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Public Hearing: Consideration of a Significant Property Alteration (SPA) permit for an addition and a new ADU in basement at a Mills Act property located at 1393 Santa Clara Street

BACKGROUND

The subject property is currently listed as a historic resource and has an approved Mills Act contract. An updated DPR 523A form was prepared by Lorie Garcia of Beyond Buildings, assessing the historical significance of the property. This updated DPR form was prepared on June 25, 2018 and is attached to this report.

The project is before the HLC in accordance with the Historic Preservation Ordinance, which requires projects with the addition of an ADU to a Historic Inventory Resource property be referred to this Commission. As the project scope includes a second story addition, the project will require the review of the Architectural Committee following the HLC review.

DISCUSSION

The subject property is a two-story Shingle architectural style residence built in circa 1904. A detached two-car garage was demolished and rebuilt in 1980. The applicant proposes to add an extension to the back of the house on both the first and second levels. An upstairs expansion of 114 square feet is for an expansion of the fourth bedroom and addition of a new bathroom. The first-floor floor addition of 90 square feet is for the expansion of the kitchen and accessible from a new rear porch. The subject residence has an existing partial and non-habitable basement. The basement addition will result in a new 1,002 square foot two-bedroom ADU and a 204 square foot non-habitable space for utilities.

The proposed addition and new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) are not part of the 10-year preservation plan, and the property owners are not proposing to amend the Mills Act contract to include these scopes. The only scope that is part of the 10-year preservation plan is the replacement of the original brick foundation to code. It has been a past practice of the HLC to support additions to a historic resource up to 25 percent of the existing square footage, provided that the design and scope is consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. The 204 square foot addition of the main house is under 25 percent of existing living area, excluding the new basement area converted to living space and a new dwelling unit. The existing Mills Act agreement remains in good standing at this time. The property owners have submitted a statement of justification and a Secretary of the Interior's Standards Review (SISR) prepared by Leslie A. G. Dill of Archives & Architecture LLC for the proposed scope.

Secretary of Interior's Standard Review:

The SISR prepared by Archive & Architecture LLC utilized the historic context and character defining

features noted in the DPR Form to review against the proposed scope of work. The summary of work includes:

- Enlargement of the existing partial basement into a full basement with the addition of a secondary unit; addition of new windows and door; addition of light wells, guardrails, and stair access to basement on north side of house.
- Rehabilitation of existing foundations for structural stability and to accommodate the basement retaining walls; this includes removal and reinstallation of character-defining exterior stone.
- Alteration and expansion of non-original rear addition (enclosed former porch) to include new living space and including a new recessed porch; addition of new door and windows.
- Expansion of existing historic right-side dormer to increase second-story living space; relocation of one paired original window unit from a demolished wall to the replacement wall; addition of a new window on the north and south side of the dormer.
- Relocation of one original window on the north wall to accommodate interior room changes.
- Removal and storage of one “vintage” window from the north elevation (from its original location).
- Removal and storage of one “vintage window from the east elevation (previously relocated).
- Removal of chimney.

The evaluator reviewed the scope of work against the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and concluded that the proposed project would retain integrity with regards to historic location and setting in the Old Quad neighborhood. The house would maintain compatible landscape setbacks, its integrity of historic materials, design and forms, and the feel of an early nineteenth century Shingle-style residence. The report also noted that the removal of the cobblestone for foundation repair would lose some historic integrity of artisanship. However, the applicant proposes to store the cobblestone after removal and reinstall them to match after installation of new foundation. A condition of approval requires reuse of the cobblestone and reinstallation.

Conclusion:

A decision to approve SPA permit shall be based upon the following factors:

- The alterations shall be designed to retain the essential character, features, and defining elements that make the HRI property significant;
- The project proposals shall not have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the HRI property;
- The alterations must be compatible with the existing structure or district; and
- The alterations must be consistent with the Secretary of Interior’s Treatment Standards.

The SISR report provided a comprehensive evaluation of the scope and a supporting conclusion that the proposal is consistent with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. Staff agrees with the report’s findings that the proposed addition and new ADU would not destroy or have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the designated property. Added conditions requiring the reuse of the cobblestone would preserve the character defining feature of the residence. The project retains its historic integrity and appearance while providing an adaptive use of an ADU in the basement. Overall, the addition and new ADU would be compatible with the existing residence and other one- and two-story residences in the immediate neighborhood.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15331, in that the project is limited to minor addition and a new habitable basement of a historic resource in a manner consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

PUBLIC CONTACT

The notice of public meeting for this item was posted at three conspicuous 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

Recommend that the Historical and Landmarks Commission finds that the proposed project located at 1393 Santa Clara Street retains the essential character defining elements that make it significant; that the proposed project does not destroy or have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the designated property; that the alterations is compatible with the existing structure; and that the rehabilitation of the residence meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, subject to the conditions of approval of the SPA permit.

Prepared by: Steve Le, Associate Planner

Approved by: Gloria Sciara, Development Review Officer

ATTACHMENTS

1. Project Data Sheet
2. Statement of Justification
3. SISR Report
4. DPR Form
5. Conditions of Approval
6. Development Plan