



STAFF REPORT
CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

For the Design Review
Commission Meeting of
August 7, 2008
PL0825265

TO: Design Review Commission

FROM: Shena Rojemann, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT: A request for an R-1 Design Review Permit to allow new front yard fencing, paving and a façade remodel of an existing two-story single-family residence, located in the Central Area of the City, north of Santa Monica Boulevard at **714 North Palm Drive.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dan Lang and Ali Kia, on behalf of the property owner, Jamie Sohachesky, have filed an application for Track 2 design review to allow new front yard fencing and a façade remodel of an existing single-family residence at **714 North Palm Drive.**

The existing residence was constructed in early 1987. Due to faulty construction, the façade and the underlying structural elements of the residence have sustained extensive water damage. The owner is repairing the underlying structural elements as approved previously but is taking this opportunity to propose changes to the façade and the front yard.

Reason for Review by the Commission

While the proposed design does contain architectural elements that are common in the Italian Renaissance Revival style, the envelope of the existing residence will not change which has resulted in difficulty adhering to a pure architectural style as outlined in the Style Catalogue. As a result, the proposed project has been brought before the Design Review Commission as a Track 2 application for review of only the follow elements:

- Materials;
- Finishes;
- Entryway;
- Front yard wall.

Adherence to Zoning Code

As proposed, the design does not alter the existing height, setbacks, parking, and floor area of the house.

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Applicant	Dan Lang/Ali Kia
Project Owner	Jamie Sohachesky
Zoning District	Central R-1 Area – North of Santa Monica Boulevard
Parcel Size	24,774 square feet
Listed in City's Historic Survey	No

SITE AND AREA CHARACTERISTICS

The project site is approximately 103-feet wide by 230-feet long lot (lot average width and length), located on the east side of the 700 block of North Palm Drive between Elevado Avenue and Sunset Boulevard. The lot is currently developed with a two-story residence and attached three-car garage. The current residence and garage are to remain and shall undergo a façade remodel. New front yard paving and a new wrought iron fence shall be added to the front yard. Surrounding development consists of one- and two-story single-family homes.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing a façade remodel and changes to the roof. The proposed facade incorporates changes intended to be consistent with the Italian Renaissance Revival style. With this goal, the applicant has expressed a willingness to redesign the existing entry to a more human scale as presented in the plans as "Alternate West Elevation".

As proposed, the façade remodel shall not affect the floor plans or the footprint of the existing residence. The existing front yard setback which varies between 54 feet 10 inches (54'-10") at the entryway and 56 feet 4 inches (56'-4") along the remainder of the front façade (BHMC requires 55 feet) will not be altered. The façade remodel incorporates the change from a flat roof to a low-pitched hipped roof finished with terra cotta barrel roof tiles and overhanging eaves carried by wooden corbels. The new roof style will not change the existing height of the structure, which shall remain at 28 feet (28'). The existing balconies shall remain and wrought iron railings are proposed. Travertine pilasters shall be incorporated onto the entryway façade, in addition to a

- Jacaranda tree (existing);
- Sycamore tree (existing);
- Palms (Cycas Revoluta) – 15 gallon.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

Notice of the proposed project and public hearing was mailed on July 28, 2008 to all property owners and residential tenants within a 100-foot radius from the exterior boundaries of the property as required by Code. To date staff has not received any comments in regards to the submitted plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The project has been reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15000 et seq.), and the City's Local CEQA guidelines. A Class 3(a) (15303) Categorical Exemption (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) has been issued in accordance with the requirements of Section 15062.

DESIGN ANALYSIS

Pursuant to BHMC Section 10-3.4415, the Design Review Commission may approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the issuance of a building permit in any matter subject to its jurisdiction after considering whether the proposed development complies with the following criteria. If the proposed project meets the criteria set forth, the Commission shall approve the application. When the proposed development does not comply with the criteria, the Commission may impose such conditions it deems necessary to bring the proposed development into conformity with the provisions of this article.

- 1. The proposed development's design exhibits an internally compatible design scheme.***

As proposed, the envelope of the existing residence will not change which has resulted in difficulty to adhere to a pure architectural style as outlined in the Style Catalogue. The proposed design does contain architectural elements that are common in the Italian Renaissance Revival style of architecture as listed in this report and the proposed façade remodel (Alternate West Elevation) is more consistent with a pure architectural style than the previous design. The commission may wish to discuss the

elaborate nature of the balcony railings and front yard fencing, and the heaviness of the entryway elements.

2. *Appropriately minimizes the appearance of scale and mass, enhances the garden-like quality of the city, and appropriately maximizes the use of required open space within the proposed architectural style.*

As stated in item 1) above, as proposed, the façade (Alternate West Elevation) is more consistent with a pure architectural style, although the Commission may wish to discuss specific architectural elements that could reduce the scale and mass of the entry. The applicant has submitted a full landscape plan, which shows the existing mature vegetation is to remain. In addition, multiple new shrubs, ferns, palms, and vines shall be added thus enhancing the garden-like quality of the city.

3. *The development will enhance the appearance of the neighborhood.*

The existing mature trees and the lush proposed landscaping shall help enhance the appearance of the neighborhood. Additionally, as stated in items 1) and 2) above, the residence shall provide a number of elements consistent with the Italian Renaissance Revival style of architecture however; the Commission may wish to discuss the scale and mass of the entry.

4. *The proposed development is designed to balance the reasonable expectation of development for the owner with the reasonable expectation of privacy of neighbors.*

As proposed, the existing side yard, front yard and rear yard setbacks shall not change and the window, door and balcony openings shall remain in the existing locations, thus having no effect on the existing privacy of the neighbors. Also, the addition of lush landscaping and maintaining the existing large trees shall help to enhance the privacy of the property owner and the neighbors.

5. *The proposed development respects prevailing site design pattern, carefully analyzing the characteristics of the surrounding group of homes, and integrates appropriate features that will ensure harmony between old and new.*

The house was built in 1987 and the house envelope is not proposed to change with the exception of the entryway design, front yard paving and the decorative wall along the front property line. As proposed, the project is consistent with the prevailing design patterns of the surrounding neighborhood. The design patterns are characterized by items such as a circular driveway, a driveway leading from the circular drive to a garage and/or a porte cochere and a walkway leading from the circular drive to the entryway of the residence. Also common in the design pattern is a wall or fence along the front lot line and the residence is set back from the front lot line a distance comparable to the

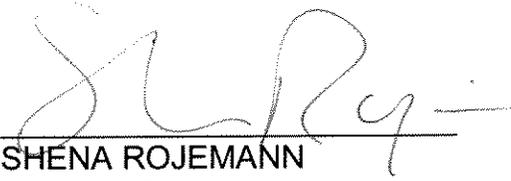
neighboring properties. Thus, having design patterns consistent with those of the neighboring properties will ensure harmony between old and new homes in the surrounding area.

Upon consideration of criteria set forth in BHMC 10-3.4415, The Commission has the following options:

1. Approve the plans as presented;
2. Approve the plans subject to the following and /or other conditions, to bring the plans into conformance with criteria set forth in BHMC 10-3.4415;
3. Disapprove the plans upon detailed findings that certain criteria set forth in BHMC 10-3.4415 are not met; or
4. Return the plans for restudy and resubmittal.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing analysis and pending the information and conclusions that may result from testimony received at the public hearing, as well as Design Review Commission deliberations, staff recommends that the Design Review Commission consider all of staff's recommendations and approve the project with any conditions the Commission may wish to add.


SHENA ROJEMANN
Assistant Planner