



STAFF REPORT
CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

For the Design Review
Commission Meeting of
September 4, 2008
PL0838509

TO: Design Review Commission

FROM: Ryan Gohlich, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT: A request for an R-1 Design Review Permit to allow a new two-story single-family residence, located in the Central Area of the City, south of Santa Monica Boulevard at 205 S. La Peer Drive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Eddie Reay of Amit Apel Design Inc, on behalf of the property owner, has filed an application for Track 2 design review to allow the construction of a new single-family residence at 205 S. La Peer Drive.

Reason for Review by the Commission

The proposed project has not been designed by a licensed architect and may not conform to a single, pure architectural style; therefore, the proposal is brought before the Design Review Commission for review as a Track 2 application.

Adherence to Zoning Code

As proposed, the design meets required zoning standards such as height, setbacks, parking, and floor area requirements; however, paving within the front yard may not comply with the BHMC and a portion of the porte cochere extends beyond the permissible dimensions of a porte cochere. As conditioned, the proposed project meets all zoning requirements.

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Applicant	Eddie Reay
Project Owner	Aaron Ariel
Zoning District	Central R-1 Area – South of Santa Monica Boulevard
Parcel Size	5,913 square feet
Listed in City's Historic Survey	No

SITE AND AREA CHARACTERISTICS

The project site is approximately 50-feet wide by 118.4-feet long (lot average width and length), located on the west side of the 200 block of South La Peer Drive between Charleville Boulevard and Gregory Way. The lot is currently developed with a single-story residence and detached garage. The existing primary residence and garage would be demolished and replaced by a new two-story residence and porte cochere. Surrounding development consists of one- and two-story single-family homes.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Building Envelope/Modulation

The proposed house and garage would have a total floor area of 3,729 square feet, slightly under the maximum allowable building area (3,865 square feet) for the subject site.

As proposed, the total height of the residence would be approximately 25 feet to the highest point of the roof (25 feet maximum height allowed for a house with a flat roof). The main entrance to the proposed structure is accessed from a covered patio adjacent to the porte cochere; however, additional access has been created at the front of the structure, which consists of an arched entry with double doors constructed of glass with wood framing. The primary covered entryway provides façade modulation, along with various portions of the second floor that are stepped back at both sides of the property. A balcony area is provided at the southern portion of the second floor's facade, in conjunction with the portions of the second floor facade that have been stepped back for modulation.

Parking

As required by the BHMC, a total of two parking spaces behind the front yard setback have been proposed in conjunction with the new house. The proposed parking will be provided by a porte cochere and the driveway that runs along the side of the house. No garage is proposed on the subject site at this time.

Design

The project's designer has not called out an individual style of architecture that was used in preparing the proposed project; however, the project incorporates a variety of elements that could be classified as fitting into the categories of Mediterranean, Spanish, and Contemporary architecture.

Materials

The materials proposed for the new structure are as follows:

- Smooth trowel stucco
- Windows and doors made of stained wood
- Clay roof tiles
- Iron work - black in color
- Central medallion above doors at front of house - stone

Paving:

The total amount of paving permitted within the front yard of the subject site is 400 square feet. The proposed project includes a total of 287 square feet of colored-concrete paving within the front yard for the driveway; however, the plans show cut flagstone pavers and additional paving leading to the front of the house that were not included in the final tabulation. Any additional paving will be verified by staff for conformance with the BHMC.

Landscape Design:

A variety of landscaping has been proposed throughout the subject site, which will help to create a lush, garden-like atmosphere. Some of the tree species located within the front yard include Shoe-String Acacia, Strawberry Tree, King Palm, and Sweetshade. Although the landscaping has been well thought out, the largest trees proposed would be in a 24" box, which is normally not considered to be the size of a mature tree. Typically, mature landscaping is desirable when installed in conjunction with a new house, and it may be necessary to provide larger, more mature landscaping in conjunction with the proposed project.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

Notice of the proposed project and public hearing was mailed on August 25, 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 regard to the submitted plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the City's environmental guidelines, and a Categorical Exemption of Class 3(a) has been issued.

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.

Although the proposed design does not follow one specific style of architecture, the design does appear to be well thought-out, and incorporates a consistent theme that could be characterized as a contemporary interpretation of Mediterranean design. The proposed house exhibits a balanced design and is consistent in its use of materials, and appears to exhibit an internally compatible design scheme. While the design could be found to be internally compatible, the Commission may wish to discuss whether the arched, glass double-doors at the center of the facade are consistent with the architectural style of the house, and may wish to require a door that incorporates additional wood 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.

The proposed project has been designed to incorporate a variety of modulation, which helps to reduce the appearance of scale and mass. The second floor of the house is set back behind the porte cochere along the northern side of the facade, and a balcony has been incorporated into the southern side of the facade, which further helps to reduce the appearance of mass and scale. Additionally, due to the use of a flat roof throughout portions of the house, the maximum height of the house is limited to 25 feet in order to meet BHMC requirements. The lower roof height helps to further reduce the appearance of scale and mass.

The landscaping plan has been well thought-out and would contribute to the garden quality of the city; however, the trees proposed for use on the subject site have been called out as 24" box trees. A 24" box is typically not considered to be a mature size, and the Commission may wish to require the use of a larger tree size.

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

As conditioned, the proposed project utilizes high quality building materials, which will help to enhance the appearance of the neighborhood. A detailed landscaping plan has been submitted in conjunction with the proposed residence, which will help to screen and enhance the proposed residence. Additionally, the design appears to follow a consistent, balanced pattern, while maintaining an appropriate level of scale and mass so as to fit in with the adjacent streetscape. Therefore, it is expected that the proposed project will help to enhance the appearance of the neighborhood.

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 structure meets the City's current side setback requirements. The northern portion of the building is largely set back from the side property line due to a porte cochere and covered patio area. The proposed setback to the south is 5 feet, which meets the minimum setback requirement. The use of code required and increased setbacks, along with minimal window and door openings along the second floor, helps to create a balance between the reasonable expectation of development and the reasonable expectation of privacy of 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 proposed project respects prevailing site design by following prevailing setbacks and building orientation found along the adjacent streetscape. Additionally, the project uses the existing driveway location and configuration to be consistent with the surrounding properties. The properties along South La Peer Drive are developed with structures varying in size and scale. The most common style of architecture found along S. La Peer Drive can be identified as Spanish Mission Revival, but there does not appear to be a consistent design pattern at this point. The proposed design manages to maximize floor area without appearing unduly massive and bulky and so would be a harmonious addition to the existing neighborhood.

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 the Design Review Commission either provide the applicant with further direction and return the item for restudy, or approve the project with the following conditions and any other conditions the Commission may wish to add:

1. The 24" box trees proposed for use in the landscaping plan shall be increased in size to a 48" box.
2. Paving within the front yard shall be reduced to a maximum of 400 square feet.
3. The architectural element that extends beyond the porte cochere along the northern property line shall be removed, consistent with BHMC requirements.



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