



Design Review
Commission
August 5, 2010

631 North Crescent Drive

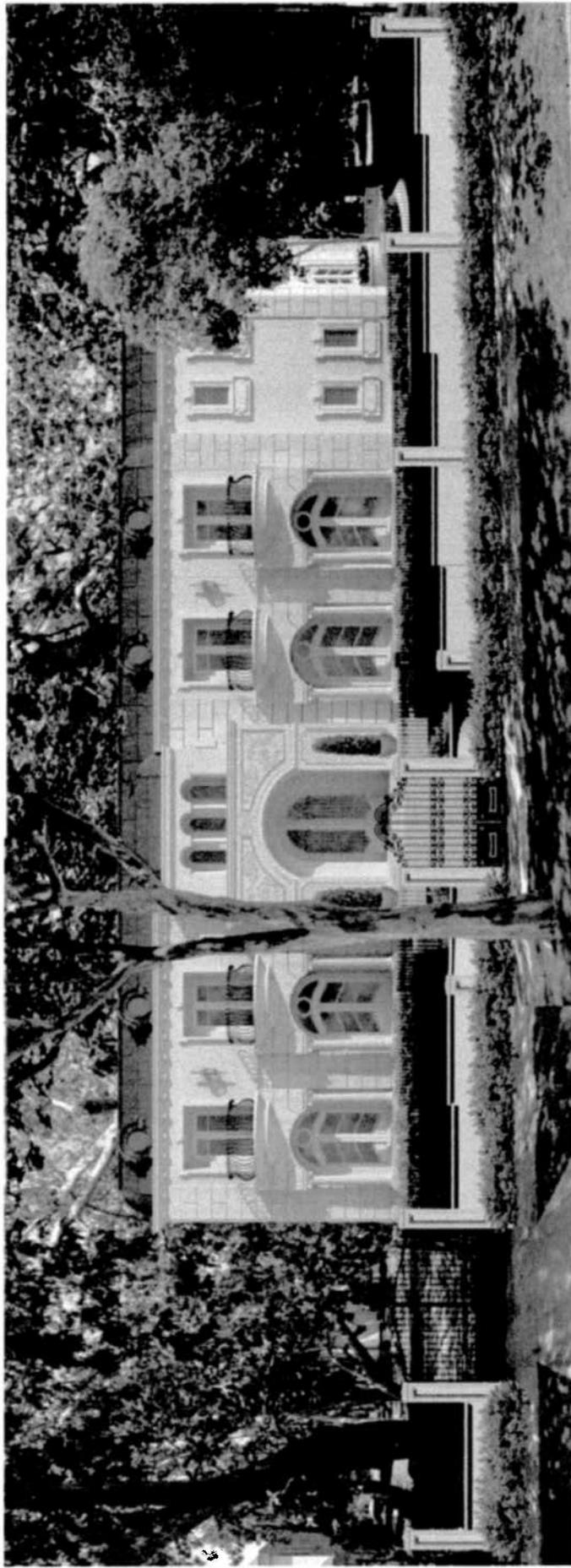


Existing



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631 North Crescent Drive



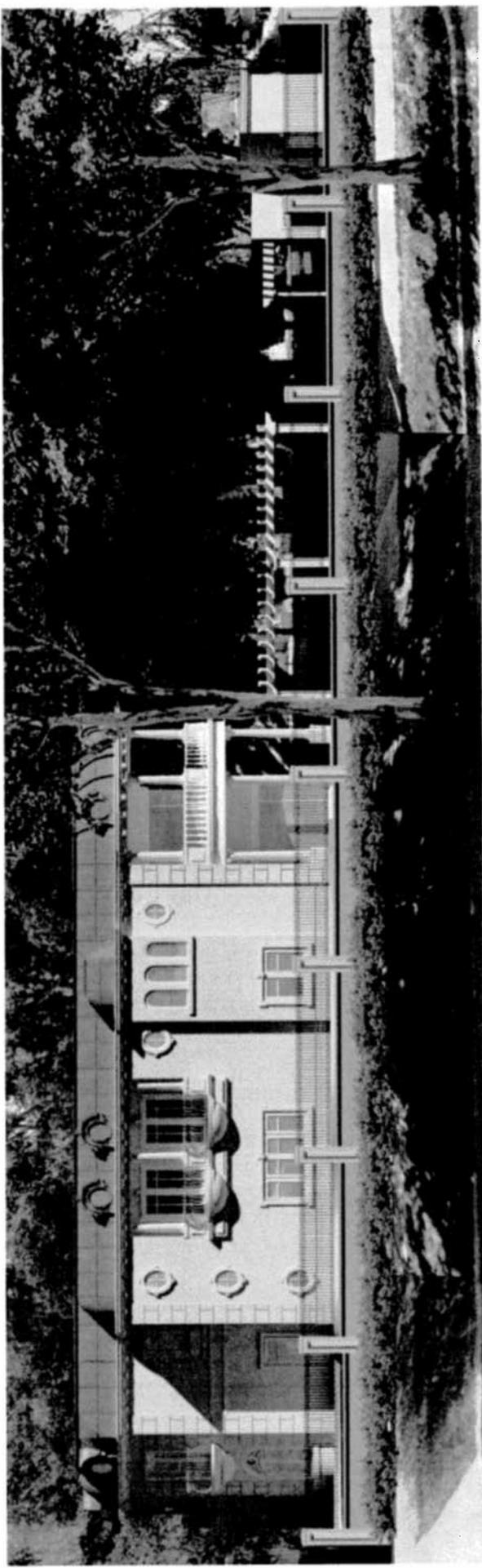
Proposed



Design Review
Commission

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631 North Crescent Drive



Proposed North Elevation
(Elevado Ave)



Design Review
Commission

August 5, 2010

631 North Crescent Drive



architecture west inc.

631 CRESCENT DRIVE
LOS ANGELES CA 90210

Proposed Rendering
(Corner of Crescent Dr. & Elevado Ave)



STAFF REPORT
CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

**For the Design Review Commission
Meeting of August 5, 2010**

TO: Design Review Commission

FROM: Shena Rojemann, 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, north of Santa Monica Boulevard at 631 North Crescent Drive. (PL 1017464)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

David Panjarian has filed an application on behalf of the property owner for a Track 2 design review to allow construction of a new two-story single-family residence at 631 N Crescent Drive.

Reason for Review by the Commission

The architectural style of this proposed new home is Beaux Arts. . The Beaux Arts style is a lavish, heavily ornamented classical style whose name comes from L'Ecole des Beaux Arts, (the School of Fine Arts), in Paris in the 19th century. The style was popularized during the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago and became popular in the United States for civic buildings and mansions on large estates at the turn of the century. The style is characterized by the following features:

- Large and grandiose compositions
- Exuberance of detail and variety of stone finishes
- Projecting facades or pavilions
- Paired colossal columns
- Windows: framed by freestanding columns, sills with balustrades, pedimented entablature on top
- Pronounced cornices and enriched entablatures topped with a tall parapet, balustrade, or attic story.

The DRC is a particularly difficult style to execute successfully in Beverly Hills given the size of the lots and the existing architectural character of the City. Proposals presented to the DRC in this style tended to have difficulty meeting the criteria for project approval, particularly the criteria addressing scale and mass of the design as well as harmony with the existing neighborhood. The Commission came to the conclusion that it was a disservice to applicants to include a design style in the Style Catalogue that is difficult to approve based on the Code-

required findings the Commission must make. The Council concurred and the Style Catalogue was amended to remove this pure style in 2008.

Although the style was removed from the catalogue, the style can still be presented to the Commission on a case-by-case basis. Consequently, the proposed project is before the Design Review Commission for review as a Track 2 application. The Commission may approve the style if the Code-required findings can be made.

Adherence to Zoning Code

As proposed, the front yard fencing located within the front yard area is located 7'-6" from the front property line. Pursuant to Beverly Hills Municipal Code (BHMC) §10-3-2420, all elements of a fence of 6 feet in height are required to be set back a minimum of 8'-0" from the front property line. Pursuant to BHMC §10-3-2422, all hardscaping within the front yard area shall be calculated as paving. As proposed the fountains in the front yard area have not been included in the paving calculations. As conditioned, the front yard fencing shall be relocated a minimum of 8'-0" from the front property line and the fountains in the front yard area shall be included in the paving calculations. As proposed, all other aspects of the project meeting zoning requirements including height, floor area and parking.

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Applicant	Architecture West – David Panjarian
Project Owner	Shahrokh & Nazanin Shamtobi
Zoning District	Central R-1 Area – North of Santa Monica Boulevard
Parcel Size	34,643 square feet
Listed in City's Historic Survey	No

SITE AND AREA CHARACTERISTICS

The project site is an approximately of 152-feet wide by 229-feet long lot (lot average width and length) and is located on the west side of the 600 block of North Crescent Drive between Elevado Avenue and Carmelita Avenue. The lot is currently developed with a single-story single-family residence and detached accessory structure. The existing primary residence and accessory structure would be demolished and replaced with a new two-story residence with subterranean parking and a detached cabana. Surrounding development consists of one- and two-story single-family homes.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Building Envelope/Modulation

The proposed house (and cabana structure) would have a total floor area of 15,274 square feet, just under the maximum allowable building area (15,357 square feet) for the subject site. The overall building envelope of the proposed residence is boxy in shape and the modulation is expressed through three basic planes: the two-story entry feature with the recessed windows

and entry door, the balconies/pediments along the first and second stories and the remainder of the façade which is highlighted with limestone cladding, stucco walls and precast window/door surrounds.

The proposed two-story residence is in the French Beaux Arts style of architecture. The entry feature contains a 14-foot double door made of iron and glass. The entry door is recessed 7 feet from the outlining entryway façade which is decorated with ornamental precast concrete. Proposed above the entry feature are three diamond-patterned stained glass windows recessed 3 feet from the façade. The stained glass windows are surrounded by concrete pillars and highlighted by concrete corbels along both sides. The same style of diamond patterned stained glass windows are proposed on the northern portion of the front façade and along the Elevado Avenue (side) elevation of the residence.

Facing Crescent Drive, the ground floor contains four (4) 12-foot tall French doors which are recessed approximately 4-feet from the columns and pediments that surround them. The pediments above the ground floor French doors extend to the second story of the residence where they merge with the four (4) second story balconies. These balconies are accessed via four (4) 8-foot tall French doors and are enclosed by bowed wrought iron railings. Three additional second story balconies/patios are proposed along the Elevado Avenue elevation. The façade of the building will be composed of a combination of smooth stucco and limestone cladding. The window and door surrounds will be composed of precast concrete. The arched parapet roof is proposed to be pre-weathered copper sheets and will contain decorative copper dormers. The roofline will be highlighted by precast dentil crown moldings. The light fixtures will be Tuscan iron and the chimney caps and ornamental details on the residence will be copper.

In addition to the residence, the applicant is proposing a 6-foot tall concrete and wrought iron fence which extends along the property facing both Crescent Drive and Elevado Avenue. A cabana structure is proposed at the rear of the residence along the Elevado Avenue side of the property.

Parking

As required by §10-3-2419 of the BHMC, a total of four (4) parking spaces behind the front yard setback have been proposed in conjunction with the new house. The proposed parking will be provided via a subterranean garage accessed from the driveway along the southern side of the property.

Design

The applicant is describing the architectural style as French 'Beaux Arts'. It includes the following characteristics:

- Two stories with an arched parapet roof
- Precast window/door moldings, columns and pediments
- Limestone quoin details
- Crown molding along the roofline
- Pre-weathered copper dormers and roof
- Stucco facade

Materials

The materials and color proposed for the new structure are as follows:

- Stucco – Sherman Williams: Biscuit #SW 6112
- Wrought iron – Sherman Williams: Anonymous #SW 7046
- Limestone cladding
- Wood framed doors and windows
- Precast ornament paint – Sherman Williams: Kilim Beige #SW 6106
- Dentil crown moldings, balustrades – Sherman Williams: Buff #SW 0050
- Roof - Pre-weathered copper
- Lighting – Tuscan Iron
- Chimney caps - Copper

A material board will be presented at the meeting.

Paving

Pursuant to BHMC §10-3-2422, the fountains proposed in the front yard should be included as part of the paving area. As conditioned, the fountains shall be calculated as part of the paving area and a revised paving plan should be submitted.

Landscape Design:

The landscape plan and landscape rendering submitted propose a formal layout that includes mature plants and trees that compliment the proposed style of architecture. The materials include:

- “Wichita Blue” trees
- Coast Redwood trees
- Japanese Maple trees
- “Tolleson’s Blue Weeping” trees
- Surinam Cherry trees

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

Notice of the proposed project and public hearing was mailed on July 26, 2010 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 with 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

Although the architectural style of the project is characteristically boxy by definition, the proposed design contains interesting details and articulation that is complex and elaborate, yet refined due to the choice of light colors and carefully selected details. The materials chosen are of high quality and the execution of the materials, showcased by the deeply inset windows and doors, the delicate paint colors, the simple wrought iron designs and the precast concrete details, appears seamless.

The proposed residence is setback more than the required setback distance from both Elevado Avenue (proposed 21'-6" vs. required 15') and Crescent Drive (proposed 53' vs. required 40'). These larger setbacks soften the impact of the large residence on the neighborhood. In addition to the setbacks, the residence has been designed with an angled corner facing the intersection of Elevado Avenue and Crescent Drive which will lessen the impact of the project on the streetscape. Vehicular access to the site and the subterranean parking have been carefully considered and designed, and will alleviate the need for a bulky gate to access the property from the rear alley. The proposed front yard fencing is to be 6-feet in height, and has been designed with the top 3feet of the fence to contain wrought iron. This fence design extends along the street side (Elevado Avenue) property line and the front property line (Crescent Drive). The angled corner of the residence, the articulated façade and recessed windows with detailed balconies, the open fence design, and the generous setbacks (above minimum requirements) are welcome examples of qualities the Commission has been seeking to soften impacts of large homes on corner lots.

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 Commission chooses to approve the design, the findings contained in Exhibit 1 must be made verbally at the meeting.

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 a 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 send the project back for restudy and that the following code issue(s) be addressed:

1. All elements of the proposed 6-foot fencing within the front yard area must be relocated a minimum of 8-feet from the front property line to meet BHMC requirements.
2. The proposed fountains in the front yard area shall be calculated as part of the paving/hardscaped within the front yard area.
3. The applicant shall provide a landscape plan for the Design Review Commission's review. The landscape plan should include a drawing of mature (5-year) plantings.



SHENA ROJEMANN
Assistant Planner

Attachment: Exhibit 1: DRC Findings

EXHIBIT 1

If the Commission finds that the project meets the criteria set forth below, the Commission shall make findings to 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.***
- 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.***
- 3. The development will 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.***
- 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.***