



Design Review Commission Report

Meeting Date: Thursday, November 7, 2013

Subject: **353 South Almont Drive (PL1329066)**

A request for an R-1 Design Review Permit to allow for construction of a new two-story single-family residence located in the Central Area of the City north of Santa Monica Boulevard. The Commission will also consider adoption of a Categorical Exemption, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Project Applicant: Ben Broukhim – bBA Studios, Inc.

Recommendation: Conduct public hearing, consider the design concerns and suggestions discussed herein, and provide the applicant with an approval.

REPORT SUMMARY

The applicant is requesting approval of a new two-story single-family residence in the Central Area of the City, north of Santa Monica Boulevard. The proposed style is identified by the applicant as Spanish Mission Revival; however, since the project does not adhere to a pure architectural style, the project is before the Commission for review.

DESIGN ANALYSIS

Based on the Urban Designer's analysis of the project, the façade design could benefit from a simplification of some elements. It appears that too many architectural elements and materials are in competition on the front façade:

- The two ground floor windows on either side of the entrance are incompatible with one another;
- The wrought iron railing pattern is overly ornate;
- The quatrefoil design at the second story seems out-of-place; and
- The inclusion of a wood trellis and stacked stone on the front elevation introduces unnecessary materials.

Staff recommends that the façade elements and materials be simplified, particularly by eliminating the stacked stone material and choosing an alternate railing pattern. Staff has not included project-specific conditions of approval related to these comments but the Commission may wish to consider these comments during their review and analysis of the project.

ZONING CODE COMPLIANCE

Applications for design review are preliminarily evaluated for compliance with the zoning code. Applicants are encouraged and have the option of requesting a comprehensive review separate and apart from this application. Formal compliance review will occur when a building permit application is

Attachment(s):

- A. Detailed Design Description and Materials (Applicant Prepared)
- B. Project Design Plans
- C. DRAFT Approval Resolution

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filed (plan check). The applicant has been advised that changes during plan check may require revisions and subsequent approval from the Design Review Commission or staff, as appropriate.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Prior to the filing of the Design Review application, the existing single family residence on the site was reviewed and found to be a potential historic resource designed by a party listed on the City's Master Architect list. Pursuant to BHMC §10-3-3218, any work involving a change in design, material, or appearance proposed on a property forty five (45) years or older and designed by a person listed on the city's list of master architects shall be subject to a thirty (30) day holding period prior to the issuance of permits. If, after the expiration of the final period of time to act, the City Council has not taken an action on the application or initiation to designate, then any pending permit(s) may be issued and demolition, alteration, or relocation of the property may proceed (BHMC §10-3-3217). Since no action was initiated to designate the subject property within the 30-day holding period, the subject property is not considered to be a historic resource in the City of Beverly Hills and the processing of the pending demolition permit may proceed.

The subject project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA – Public Resources Code §§21000 – 21178), pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines in that the project includes the review of building design, colors and materials to the façade of the building, front yard landscaping or minor low-scaled accessory structures, such as fences or walls.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND NOTIFICATION

The project requires mailed public notice within 100 feet of the subject property be mailed, and an on-site notice at the subject property be posted, ten (10) days prior to the hearing. The public notice for this project was mailed on Friday, October 25, 2013; the site was posted on October 21, 2013. To date staff has not received comments in regards to the submitted project.



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Attachment A

Detailed Design Description
and Materials (applicant prepared)

SECTION 2 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION / ZONING INFORMATION

A Indicate Requested Application:

- Track 1 Application (Administrative Review)
- Project must adhere to a pure architectural style identified in the City's Residential Design Style Catalogue. The Catalogue is available online at:
<http://www.beverlyhills.org/cbhfiles/storage/files/filebank/3435-Residential%20Design%20Catalog%20May%202008.pdf>
 - Plans must be prepared and stamped by an architect licensed in the State of California.
 - Three (3) sets of plans required (see Section 6 for plan size requirements).
- Track 2 Application (Commission Review)
- Eight (8) sets of plans required (see Section 6 for plan size requirements).
 - Public Notice materials required (see Section 5 for public notice requirements).

B Briefly describe the architectural style(s) that you are proposing and how the proposed materials, finishes and proportions aid in achieving the style(s):

We used visual styles that consciously echo the style of the Mediterranean house style. Buildings in this style take their primary design cues from romantic Italian and Spanish architecture - low-pitched tile or earth tone terra cotta roofs, stucco walls and arch motifs are common denominators among Mediterranean style house plans and are incorporated in our design. We've used balconies and decorative wrought iron giving the house an exotic feel, while the large windows provide a connection to the outdoors. The asymmetrical facade and placement of rooflines borrow the design from a Spanish style home along with decorative elements (stone cladding and crown molding) on the facade of an Italian style home yielding a warm and welcoming Mediterranean style house.

C Identify the Project Zoning (City Zoning Map available online at <http://gis.beverlyhills.org/>)

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> R-1 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R-1.5X2 | <input type="checkbox"/> R-1.8X |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R-1X | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R-1.6X | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R-1.5X | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R-1.7X | |

D Site & Area Characteristics

Lot Dimensions: 50' x 119.9' Lot Area (square feet): 5,995 sf
 Adjacent Streets: Residence is on Almont, between Gregory Way and Olympic Blvd

E Lot is currently developed with (check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Single-Story Residence | <input type="checkbox"/> Two-Story Residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guest House | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessory Structure(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

F Are any protected trees located on the property? (See Beverly Hills Municipal Code Section 10-3-2900)?

Yes No

If YES, provide the following information:

	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Sizes</u>	<u>Reason for Removal</u>
Heritage:			
Native:			
Urban Grove:			

G Has the existing residence been designed by a notable architect or is it identified on any historic resource inventory, including the City of Beverly Residential Survey? (available online at: <http://www.beverlyhills.org/citygovernment/departments/communitydevelopment/planning/historicpreservation/historicresources>)

Yes No If yes, please list Architect's name:

SECTION 3 – PROJECT DETAILS AND MATERIALS (continues on next page)

A Describe your public outreach efforts to adjacent neighbors and property owners:

We have not reached out to neighbors to discuss this project

B Indicate the project zoning details pursuant to Beverly Hills Municipal Code Section 10-3-2400:

Code Regulation	Allowed By Code	Existing Condition	Proposed Condition
Height:	28'	15'-4"	27'-1"
Roof Plate Height:	22'	10'	22'
Floor Area:	3,898 sf	1623.51 sf	3,831.85 sf
Rear Setbacks:	45'	45.48'	45'
Side Setbacks:	S/E 5' N/W 5'9'	S/E 11.45' N/W 3.16'	S/E 5' N/W 5'9'
Parking Spaces:	3	2	3

C List the specific materials and finishes for all the architectural features of the project (Be Specific):

FAÇADE (List all material for all portions visible from the street)

Material: Stucco - La Habra
Texture /Finish: Santa Barbara
Color / Transparency: X-81584 Suffolk

WINDOWS (Include frame, trim, glass, metal, etc)

Material: Wood / Aluminum Clad
Texture /Finish: Wood trim exposed
Color / Transparency: Mahogany finish

DOORS (Include frame, trim, glass, metal, etc)

Material: Wood / Aluminum Clad, Solid Wood
Texture /Finish: Wood trim exposed, clear
Color / Transparency: Mahogany

PEDIMENTS

Material:
Texture /Finish:
Color / Transparency:

ROOF

Material: Clay Tile Roof by Boral
Texture /Finish: Model: ClayMax Clay Roof Tile
Color / Transparency: Newport Blend

CORBELS

Material: Wood
Texture /Finish: Painted Matte Finish
Color / Transparency: DEA158 Northern Territory

CHIMNEY(S)

Material:
Texture /Finish:
Color / Transparency:

SECTION 3 – PROJECT DETAILS AND MATERIALS (continued from previous page)

COLUMNS

Material:
Texture /Finish:
Color / Transparency:

BALCONIES & RAILINGS

Material: Wrought Iron
Texture /Finish: Painted / Sealed / Gloss
Color / Transparency: MP31846 Onyx

TRELLIS, AWNINGS, CANOPIES

Material: Wood
Texture /Finish: Semi Gloss / Marine Finish
Color / Transparency: Mahogany

DOWNSPOUTS / GUTTERS

Material: Sheet Metal
Texture /Finish: Painted Gloss
Color / Transparency: MP12206 Brown Bomber

EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Material: Light sconces to be metal and glass
Texture /Finish: Painted
Color / Transparency: Bronze glass

PAVED SURFACES

Material: Patio Paver / Davis Colored Concrete
Texture /Finish: Smooth Tile (Custom Pattern) / Sandstone Finish (Custom Pattern)
Color / Transparency: Mocha Travertine / Palomino 5447

FREESTANDING WALLS AND FENCES

Material: CMU
Texture /Finish: Smooth Stucco
Color / Transparency: to match house

OTHER DESIGN ELEMENTS

Material:
Texture /Finish:
Color / Transparency:

D Describe the proposed landscape theme. Explain how the proposed landscaping complements the proposed style of architecture:

The landscaping complements the house with the floor plan that is open offering an easy circulation between gracious rooms that open onto a lush garden with patio and pool in the rear along with elegant moments throughout framing the house at certain points. The harmony of indigenous vegetation to So. Cal. with subtle accents of color as well as those from the Italian / Tuscan gardens that would thrive in this climate enhances the Mediterranean feel of warmth within the property.

SECTION 4 – DESIGN ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

A Clearly identify how your project adheres to each of the required findings of the Design Review Commission:

1. Describe how the proposed development's design exhibits an internally compatible design scheme.

Our design has been a process of working through the elements of the Mediterranean style, involving the planning department through our process, and developing a scheme that fits within the context of our neighborhood. We are staying with the context of the neighborhood by going with the Spanish style, staying below our height limits and articulating our facade to move away from the 2 story boxes that others have developed in the area.

2. Describe how the proposed development's design appropriately minimizes the appearance of scale and mass, how the design enhances the garden like quality of the City and appropriately maximizes the use of required open space within the proposed architectural style.

We have designed a landscape in the front of the house which lends itself to the Southern California garden style living, with plush green landscaping that frames doors which open up onto the front yard. The vine on the facade will help camouflage the house. As previously mentioned, the massing of our house is maintained at a height lower than our limit to balance the height differentiation between our neighbors to the north and south.

3. Describe how the proposed development will enhance the appearance of the neighborhood.

The house is currently dry and barren in terms of landscaping. The home has been as is for quite some time now and lacking character and detail. Much of the development in the area has been of Italian or French design and does not fit the character of the neighborhood. Our proposal is of the same Italian / Spanish style that is consistent with the neighborhood today and with the level of detail and the lush landscaping we are proposing, the long standing Beverly Hills residents that we are building this house for will be adding to the community they grew up in.

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

We have taken the view into our neighbors yard and their houses and subsequently their view into this house and backyard into consideration and feel that much of that can be remedied with landscaping and window placement.

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

We aimed to design the front of the house with the community in mind. The style of house we chose is in line with prevailing Mediterranean (Italian / Spanish) style homes in the area. We are not proposing a large mansion in a box but rather creating a Mediterranean style house that blends into its context in a subtle way. Our landscaping concept further drives this point home with more green vegetation rather than loud colors. We have considered how this house will fit into its context quite extensively and have strived to give it that subtle character and not one that is loud and obtrusive.



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Attachment B
Project Design Plans



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Attachment C

DRAFT Approval Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. DR XX-13

RESOLUTION OF THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS CONDITIONALLY APPROVING AN R-1 DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO ALLOW A NEW TWO-STORY SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE AT THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 353 SOUTH ALMONT DRIVE (PL1329066).

The Design Review Commission of the City of Beverly Hills hereby finds, resolves and determines as follows:

Section 1. Ben Borukhim of bBA Studios, Inc., architect, on behalf of Esshagian Revocable Family Trust, property owner, (Collectively the “Applicant”), has applied for an R-1 Design Review Permit for design approval of a new two-story single-family residence for the property located at 353 South Almont Drive which is located in the city’s Central R-1 Zone.

Section 2. Beverly Hills Municipal Code Article 44, Chapter 3 of Title 10, authorizes the Design Review Commission the authority to approve, approve with conditions or deny design-related aspects of projects located in the city’s Central R-1 zone, subject to findings set forth in Beverly Municipal Code Section 10-3-4415.

Section 3. The subject project has been reviewed pursuant to the provisions set forth in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA – Public Resource Code Sections 21000, *et seq.*), the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15000 *et seq.*), and the city’s local CEQA Guidelines. The subject project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines in that the project includes the review of building design, colors and materials to the façade of the building, front yard landscaping or minor low-scaled accessory structures, such as fences or walls. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the subject activity could result in a significant effect on the environment.

Section 4. The Design Review Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing on November 7, 2013 at which time oral and documentary evidence was received concerning the application.

Section 5. Based upon the evidence presented at the hearings, including the staff report(s), oral and written testimony, the Design Review Commission hereby finds as follows with respect to the R-1 Design Review Permit:

A. The proposed development's design exhibits an internally compatible design scheme in that the project's proportions, form, fenestration, scale, mass, color and materials are representative of the architectural style and design scheme chosen for the building. These design elements, including existing or proposed landscaping, paving, or perimeter fencing or walls are internally compatible and consistent with the overall design.

B. The proposed development's design appropriately minimizes the appearance of scale and mass and enhances the garden like quality of the city and appropriately maximizes the use of required open space within the proposed architectural style. Specifically, the project, as conditioned, complies with applicable provisions of the municipal code that regulate overall building size, height, scale and mass. Additionally, the building provides appropriate building modulation and uses window and other design components that minimize the visual bulk and mass. The garden quality of the city is maintained through appropriately proportioned paving in the required front yard and with the incorporation of existing or proposed plant material of appropriate sizes that complement the architectural style and help reduce overall mass and scale.

C. The proposed development will enhance the appearance of the neighborhood in that the new construction has been designed in context to the appearance, mass and scale of adjacent

properties and other properties in the neighborhood. The project includes the use of high quality building materials and appropriately uses colors and design ornamentation that is appropriate to the neighborhood. Existing or new planting will promote the garden quality image and appearance of the city, consistent with city goals and existing mature landscaping in the neighborhood.

D. The proposed development is designed to balance the reasonable expectation of development for the owner with the reasonable expectation of privacy of neighbors. The City's zoning regulations set forth maximum building height and mass standards with which this project, as conditioned, conforms. The project is being constructed in an urbanized environment and has other adjacent and nearby residences. To provide a reasonable expectation of privacy, the Design Review Commission reviewed the placement of windows on the subject and adjacent properties, considered the location of private outdoor areas and evaluated the projects proposed and neighbors' existing landscaping. Accordingly, based on this review, and as conditioned by this resolution, the project balances reasonable expectations for privacy and development.

E. The proposed development respects prevailing site design patterns, carefully analyzing the characteristics of the surrounding group of homes, and integrates appropriate features that will ensure harmony between old and new. Specifically, the project has been designed with an internally compatible architectural theme and is modulated in a manner that respects privacy and scale of development to adjacent properties. The project design, proportionality and landscaping is compatible with other properties in the general vicinity and the project reinforces a cohesive streetscape. In its review, the Design Review Commission carefully studied the proposed project in context to adjacent properties and conducted individual site inspections or reviewed photographs of the surrounding group of homes.

Section 6. Based on the foregoing, the Design Review Commission hereby grants the request defined in this resolution subject to the following conditions:

Project-Specific Conditions

1. No special conditions have been imposed for this project.

Standard Conditions

2. **Revised Plan Submittal.** For all projects that are approved with project-specific conditions, a revised plan set that has fully incorporated all such conditions shall be submitted to the project planner, both in hard copy format and in electronic format, prior to submitting for the building permit plan check process.
3. **Design Approval.** Project approval is for the design-related aspects of the project only. No approval is implied or granted with regard to applicable city zoning or technical codes, which may require review and approval from other city commissions or officials.
4. **Compliance with Municipal Code.** Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall demonstrate compliance with all applicable provisions of the city's municipal code and applicable conditions imposed by any discretionary review approval.
5. **Compliance with Special Conditions.** Any special conditions that require approval by the Director of Community Development, or designee, shall be submitted to the staff liaison to the Commission within fourteen (14) days of approval or prior to submittal of the plan check review application, whichever is greater.
6. **Project Rendering.** Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall incorporate into the building permit set of plans, an updated color rendering of all building facades that are visible from

the public street. The quality and detail of the rendering shall be subject to approval from the Director of Community Development, or designee, and shall include sufficient design information to evaluate project compliance during construction.

7. **Approval Resolution.** A copy of the signed resolution of approval shall be scanned onto the cover sheet(s) of the building permit set of plans.
8. **Substantial Compliance with Approved Plans.** The Director of Community Development, or designee, shall determine if changes to the approved project are in substantial compliance with the Commission's action. This determination shall be subject to applicable fees and charges. A substantial modification to the approved project requires approval from the Design Review Commission.
9. **Covenant Recording.** Prior to issuance of a building permit, a covenant shall be filed with the Los Angeles County Register-Recorder/City Clerk that includes a copy of this resolution as an exhibit. The Applicant may submit evidence of proper filing to the Community Development Department or submit an application along with applicable fees to the development for covenant preparation and filing.
10. **Validity of Permits.** The rights granted by this approval shall remain valid for three (3) years from the date of approval, unless extended pursuant to Beverly Hills Municipal Code Section 10-3-207.
11. **Appeals.** Decisions of the Design Review Commission may be appealed to the Planning Commission within fourteen (14) days of the final action by filing a written appeal and paying appropriate fees with the City Clerk.

Section 7. The Secretary of the Design Review Commission shall certify to the passage, approval, and adoption of this resolution, and shall cause this resolution and its certification to be entered in the administrative record maintained by the Community Development Department.

Section 8. Decisions of the Design Review Commission may be appealed to the Planning Commission within fourteen (14) days of the final action by filling a written appeal and paying appropriate fees with the City of Beverly Hills City Clerk.

Approved as to Form and Content:

Adopted: November 7, 2013

William Crouch, Commission Secretary
Community Development Department

Ilene Nathan, Chairperson
Design Review Commission