

DECISION DATE: April 26, 2017

PREPARED BY: S. McCormick

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY REPORT

APPLICATION NO.: Design Review 2-17 (DR 2-17)

APPLICANT: Jennifer Gabara

OWNER: Hsueh Mei Gabara TTEE

AGENT: Jess Construction

PROJECT: Design Review (DR 2-17) for the removal of existing redwood siding on the Redwood Avenue front façade of the building installation of HardiPlank Lap Siding on Redwood Avenue front facade and exterior painting of the Redwood Avenue façade.

LOCATION: 325 E Redwood Avenue, Fort Bragg, CA

APN: 008-181-11-00 (311 N Harrison Street)

LOT SIZE: 14,500 square feet

ZONING: Central Business District

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: This project is exempt from CEQA per Statutory Exemption §15301 Existing Facilities, minor interior and exterior alterations.

SURROUNDING LAND USES: NORTH: Residential Neighborhood
EAST: Commercial
SOUTH: Apartment Building
WEST: Commercial

APPEALABLE PROJECT: **Can be appealed to City Council**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property is located on the 300 block of East Redwood Avenue at the corner of Harrison Street. The project requires Design Review approval to remove the existing redwood siding along the Redwood Avenue frontage and replace it with HardiPlank Cedarmill Lap Siding. HardiPlank is a fiber cement board with a 15 year, non-prorated and 30 year pro-rated warranty. The property owner also proposes to paint the exterior of the building with a color scheme of two different shades of yellow. No other modifications to the building are proposed.



DESIGN REVIEW

The subject property is located in the Central Business District (CBD), and therefore exterior alterations require Design Review approval per Section 18.71.050(B)(1)(ii) of the Inland Land Use and Development Code (ILUDC).

Pursuant to Section 18.71.050(A), the purpose of Design Review is to ensure that the design of proposed development assists in maintaining and enhancing the small-town, coastal, historic and rural character of the community.

The subject building was built circa 1911/1912 and retains only a minimal amount of the original historic architectural details as numerous alterations have been made over the decades. The building was originally constructed as a 3-story building on the entire lot and occupied by the Finnish Carob Hotel. The original entry was recessed on the corner and supported by a column. Large windows were focused around the corner entry with one-of-one double hung windows on the second and third stories. The roofline was simple with decorative cornices under the small overhang. Although it is not known when northeastern portion of building was demolished, according to Fort Bragg Mendocino Coast Historical Society, the third story was removed in the late 1950's / early 1960's, and the existing redwood shingles and siding were added in the mid-1970's (see attachment). All windows and doors have been replaced with aluminum horizontal sliding windows.



Subject property: 2017



Original building: circa 1920

Through the numerous alterations, the building no longer possesses the level of historic integrity necessary to be considered significant.

Section 2.24 Architecture of the Citywide Design Guidelines states that “in many ways it is the historic Victorian-era architectural tradition of the 1860-1930’s that are responsible for the unique character of Downtown Fort Bragg”. The original Finnish Carob Hotel was built in 1911/1912 in the Victorian-Edwardian style, which is generally less ornate than high or late Victorian architecture. The architectural design is directly linked to the historical past, however numerous modifications have been made over the decades and it is currently not a historical representation of the original building.

Section 2.24 of The Citywide Design Guidelines goes on to discuss Architectural Form and Composition, to distinguish typical architectural elements of a Downtown Fort Bragg Building to include:

- a well-defined base, mid-section and top story roofline;
- architectural features to accent corner buildings;
- side and rear building facades compatible with the front facade;
- windows as an important element of buildings overall composition.

The subject building is located on the corner between a street and an alley and therefore has three facades which are highly visible from the public street. The proposal to replace only one of the facades is not consistent with Section 2.24 as the side and rear facades will be clad with a different material than the front façade. In addition, the removal of the cornice detail below the roofline would eliminate an interesting architectural detail. In order to ensure that the project is consistent with the architectural form requirements of the Citywide Design Guidelines, staff proposes the following special conditions:

Special Condition 1: The existing cornice detail along the roofline must be retained. If replacement is necessary, the cornice detail must be replaced in-kind, per the approval of the Community Development Director.

Special Condition 2: The Harrison Street Façade and the Redwood Street Façade shall be sided with the same building materials and repainted to match.

Alternately, Planning Commission may choose to require that two sides and front facades visible from the street be sided with the same building materials.

Section 2.24 of the City Wide Design Guidelines requires that the palette of wall materials be kept to a minimum, and states that: 1) materials should be highly durable and require minimal maintenance; and 2) wood siding is preferred, especially on first story accessible frontages.

If the Planning Commission determines that HardiPlank siding is not consistent with the Citywide Guidelines preference for wood siding on the first-story frontage, the following additional Special Condition would address this concern:

Special Condition 3: In consideration that the Citywide Design Guidelines states that the preferred material is wood siding, leave wood paneling on upper portion (lower portion in disrepair) and reside lower portion of building only.

In regard to Building Color, Section 2.24 of the Citywide Design Guidelines states that:

1. Colors should visually relate building elements to each other and relate the entire building to neighboring facades;
2. No more than three colors should be used on any given façade; and
3. Whenever possible, exterior building colors should reflect the basic colors of architectural style or period.

Generally speaking, bright rich color combinations associated with the Victorian-era are appropriate for Downtown. The bright yellow color scheme proposed by the applicant is consistent with Victorian-era colors and therefore consistent with City's Design Review Guidelines, as shown below:



Example of Victorian-era Color Palette



*Applicant's Proposed Exterior Color Scheme
WALLS (left) TRIM (right)*

As conditioned above, the project is consistent with the Citywide Design Guidelines.

The proposed project complies with the Design Review criteria as enumerated in Section 18.71.050(E) of the ILUDC as follows:

- 1. Complies with the purpose and requirements of this Section;**

The proposed modifications to the building, as described and conditioned above, are consistent with the purpose and requirements of Design Review..

2. Provides architectural design, building massing, and scale appropriate to and compatible with the site surroundings and the community;

The subject building is compatible with the eclectic mix of architectural styles and building materials in the immediate neighborhood. The proposed project does not result in any changes to building massing or scale, which is appropriate and compatible with site surroundings and the community. However, replacement of the redwood siding with a modern cement fiber material would alter the design of the subject building. The proposed material is considered to be durable and require minimal maintenance, which is consistent with Section 2.24 of The Citywide Design Guidelines. The removal of the cornices along the roofline is not consistent with the design guidelines as they contribute to the building's architectural details. A Special Condition is proposed to address this issue. See Special Condition 2 above.

3. Provides attractive and desirable site layout and design, including building arrangement, exterior appearance and setbacks, drainage, fences and walls, grading, landscaping, lighting, signs, etc.;

No proposed changes to site layout, building arrangement, setbacks, drainage, fences and walls, grading, landscaping, lighting, signs, etc. The exterior appearance will be altered significantly as discussed above.

4. Provides efficient and safe public access, circulation, and parking;

The proposed project will not alter the existing access, circulation or parking.

5. Provides appropriate open space and landscaping, including the use of water efficient landscaping;

No landscaping or open space is proposed or required and the existing footprint will remain unchanged.

6. Is consistent with the Inland General Plan, any applicable specific plan, and the Local Coastal Program if located in the Coastal Zone; and the project is consistent with the General Plan;

The proposed project is consistent with the ILUDC and General Plan policies related to Central Business District Zoning and Land Uses.

7. Complies and is consistent with the City's Design Guidelines.

With recommended Special Conditions, the project is consistent with the Citywide Design Guidelines.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

This project is exempt from CEQA per Statutory Exemption §15301 Existing Facilities, which exempts minor interior and exterior alterations.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

1. Approve Design Review 2-17 (DR 2-17), based on the findings and subject to the Special and Standard Conditions.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION

2. Deliberate without a decision, provide direction to Staff and continue action to a future meeting.

GENERAL FINDINGS

1. The proposed project is consistent with the purpose and intent of the zoning district, as well as all other provisions of the General Plan, Inland Land Use and Development Code (ILUDC), and the Fort Bragg Municipal Code;
2. The design, location, size, and operating characteristics of the proposed activity are compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity;
3. The site is physically suitable in terms of design, location, shape, size, operating characteristics, and the provision of public and emergency vehicle (e.g., fire and medical) access and public services and utilities (e.g., fire protection, police protection, potable water, schools, solid waste collection and disposal, storm drainage, wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal, etc.), to ensure that the type, density, and intensity of use being proposed would not endanger, jeopardize, or otherwise constitute a hazard to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare, or be materially injurious to the improvements, persons, property, or uses in the vicinity and zoning district in which the property is located; and
4. For the purposes of environmental determination, the project is exempt from CEQA, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Statutory Exemption §15301 Existing Facilities, which exempts minor interior and exterior alterations.

DESIGN REVIEW FINDINGS

1. Subject to Special Conditions, the project complies with the purpose and requirements of ILUDC Section 18.71.050 Design Review;
2. The project provides architectural design, building massing, and scale appropriate to and compatible with the site surroundings and the community;
3. Subject to Special Conditions, the project provides attractive and desirable site layout and design, including building arrangement, exterior appearance and setbacks, drainage, fences and walls, grading, landscaping, lighting, signs, etc.;
4. The project provides efficient and safe public access, circulation, and parking;
5. The project provides appropriate open space and landscaping, including the use of water efficient landscaping;
6. The project is consistent with the Inland General Plan, any applicable specific plan, and the ILUDC; and
7. Subject to Special Conditions, the project complies and is consistent with the Citywide Design Guidelines.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Special Condition 1: The existing cornice detail along the roofline must be retained. If replacement is necessary, the cornice detail must be replaced in-kind, per the approval of the Community Development Director.

Special Condition 2: The Harrison Street Façade and the Redwood Street Façade shall be sided with the same building materials and repainted to match.

Special Condition 3: In consideration that the Citywide Design Guidelines states that the preferred material is wood siding, leave wood paneling on upper portion (lower portion in disrepair) and reside lower portion of building only.

STANDARD CONDITIONS

1. This action shall become final on the 11th day following the decision unless an appeal to the City Council is filed pursuant to ILUDC Chapter 18.92 - Appeals.
2. The use and occupancy of the premises shall be established and maintained in conformance with the requirements of this permit and all applicable provisions of the ILUDC.
3. The application, along with supplemental exhibits and related material, shall be considered elements of this permit, and compliance therewith is mandatory, unless an amendment has been approved by the City.
4. This permit shall be subject to the securing of all necessary permits for the installation, maintenance, operation, and removal of the existing storage tanks and structures as well as the installation, maintenance, and operation of the new storage tank from all agencies having jurisdiction over fuel storage tanks, including without limitation the Fort Bragg Fire District. This permit shall also be subject to full compliance with all city, county, state, and federal regulations regarding the installation, maintenance, operation, and removal of fuel storage tanks. All plans submitted with the required permit applications shall be consistent with this approval. All construction shall be consistent with all Building, Fire, and Health code considerations as well as other applicable agency codes.
5. The applicant shall secure all required building permits for the proposed project as required by the Mendocino County Building Department.
6. If any person excavating or otherwise disturbing the earth discovers any archaeological site during project construction, the following actions shall be taken: 1) cease and desist from all further excavation and disturbances within 25 feet of the discovery; 2) notify the Fort Bragg Community Development Department within 24 hours of the discovery; and 3) retain a professional archaeologist to determine appropriate action in consultation with stakeholders such as Native American groups that have ties to the area.
7. This permit shall be subject to revocation or modification upon a finding of any one or more of the following:
 - (a) That such permit was obtained or extended by fraud.
 - (b) That one or more of the conditions upon which such permit was granted have been violated.
 - (c) That the use for which the permit was granted is so conducted as to be detrimental to the public health, welfare, or safety or as to be a nuisance.
 - (d) A final judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction has declared one or more conditions to be void or ineffective, or has enjoined or otherwise prohibited the enforcement or operation of one or more conditions.

8. Unless a condition of approval or other provision of the Inland Land Use and Development Code establishes a different time limit, any permit or approval not exercised within 24 months of approval shall expire and become void, except where an extension of time is approved in compliance with ILUDC Subsection 17.76.070(B).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Sanborn Maps