



# Administrative Report

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J.2., File # PA25-0486

Meeting Date: 4/9/2025

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**TO: PUBLIC AMENITIES COMMISSION**  
**FROM: ANDREW SVITEK, SENIOR PLANNER**

## **TITLE**

A PUBLIC HEARING CONSIDERING AN EXEMPTION DECLARATION AND CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION FOR AN ADDITION TO THE DESIGNATED HISTORIC PROPERTY LOCATED AT 510 GARNET STREET

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Open public hearing and administer oath;
2. Take testimony from staff, applicant, and interested parties;
3. Close public hearing and deliberate; and
4. Adopt a resolution by title only approving the request subject to the findings and conditions contained therein.

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PUBLIC AMENITIES COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF REDONDO BEACH APPROVING AN EXEMPTION DECLARATION AND A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR AN ADDITION TO THE DESIGNATED HISTORIC PROPERTY LOCATED AT 510 GARNET STREET PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF CHAPTER 4, TITLE 10 OF THE REDONDO BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The applicant is requesting that the Public Amenities Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness application for an addition to the historically designated property at 510 Garnet Street. The proposed project includes a two-story addition along the rear and side elevation totaling 1,743 SF, of which 1,054 SF is on the first floor and 689 SF is on the second floor. The project will also consist of interior remodeling and upgrading of the foundation and structural framing.

The Public Amenities Commission previously considered this request at its meeting on February 12, 2025. Proposed plans for the addition were presented and the Commission provided comments and direction to the applicant for revisions. The Commission tabled the item to allow time for the applicant to make revisions to the plans, providing the following comments and direction:

- The second story windows should be retained.
- The scale of eastern portion of the addition could be reduced.

- The proposed roof deck is not consistent with the historic character of the home.

In addition to redesigning the project in response to the Commission's comments and directions, the applicant subsequently engaged with an immediately adjacent property owner to address their concerns with windows and privacy.

Attached to this report are the applicants' revised plans which address the comments and directions from both the Commission and the adjacent neighbor.

## **BACKGROUND**

The property is a corner lot on the south side of Garnet Street between South Camino Real on the west and South Guadalupe Avenue on the east. The shape of the parcel is an irregular trapezoid with 91 feet along the Garnet street frontage narrowing to 44 feet in width at the rear property line. The depth of the property is approximately 85 feet. The existing two-story residence has 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms and is approximately 1,831 square feet, with a 1,363 square-foot first floor, including the converted attached garage, and a 468 square-foot second floor. The conversion of the attached garage to an Accessory Dwelling Unit ("ADU") is being processed under a separate permit. The property is zoned R-3 (Low Density Multiple-Family Residential).

The Preservation Commission designated the property, which is known as the "Lowe House," as a local Historic Landmark Number 20 on May 5, 1994. A search of historic records disclosed that Elmer Lowe lived in the house starting in 1917. Mr. Lowe operated a billiards hall and tobacco shop in Redondo Beach. The residence was built in 1910. While the residence incorporates California Bungalow characteristics, it also blends Queen Anne influences, making it a transitional design typical of homes built in the early 1900s before the Craftsman movement became fully dominant. The key features characteristic of the California Bungalow style is a low-pitched gable roof, exposed eaves with overhangs, a simple covered porch, and horizontal wood lap siding. The Queen-Anne influences are the ornamental details including the decorative gable and small attic window, and round porch columns. The property has had an active Mills Act contract with the City since June 21, 1994.

## **PROPOSED PROJECT**

The proposed addition was presented to the Public Amenities Commission at their meeting of February 12. Based on the direction and comments by the Commission at that meeting, the applicant has revised the design of the proposed addition as follows:

- The existing windows on second story will remain (3 on east side, 2 on north side/front facing, 1 on west side).
- The eastern portion of the second story addition will be scaled back to be entirely behind the existing second story. The small jogs that were proposed between the existing second floor and the addition to allow for a reconfigured stair case have been eliminated by relocating the staircase entirely to the rear.
- The resulting second floor addition is setback 36'10" from the front property line.
- The overall mass of the eastern portion of the second-floor addition has been further reduced by incorporating a sloping roof line towards the east.

- The proposed roof deck has been shifted towards the rear of the structure and the overall area has been reduced from 378.5 SF to 250 SF. Additionally, the roof deck has been entirely integrated within the roof line with the exception of a railing along the rear (rear yard facing) elevation.

Attached to this report are a series of exhibits that show the existing elevations, the initially proposed elevations (February 12, 2025), and the proposed revised floor plans (April 9, 2025)

The exterior features of the new addition will match and slightly differentiate the style of the original house. The addition will have horizontal wood siding similar to the original house, but the siding will be wider. The addition will also incorporate similar single-hung wood windows that include a differentiating multi pane design. The addition will use gables to compliment the style of the original house. The addition will feature exposed rafters along the side street (Camino Real) façade to match the original front façade.

The massing of the new addition is recessed to the rear and side (south and east elevation) to make the addition subordinate to the existing house. On the first floor, the west facing gable is extended westerly to increase the size of the living and dining room. The same elements of the original gable are repeated on the extended facade facing Camino Real. On the second floor the roof will be raised in the west facing gable to make a low-ceilinged sleeping nook into a master bathroom area.

The project will restore and maintain existing historical elements using existing materials unless restoration is not possible, in which case the elements will be replaced to match the existing materials. The addition located towards the rear of the existing house will be of similar but distinguishably different materials and details, again to conform to Secretary of Interior standards, and will be painted a different complementary color than the historical buildings so as to create an aesthetically pleasing effect that emphasizes the existing historical structures.

## **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

The criteria for the approval of a certificate of appropriateness in the case of a landmark states that the proposed work: (1) conforms to the prescriptive standards adopted by the Commission (Design Guidelines for the Certificate of Appropriateness Program for Landmarks and Historic Districts adopted on September 1991); (2) will not detrimentally alter, destroy, or adversely affect any exterior improvement or exterior architectural feature; and (3) will retain the essential elements that make the resource significant.

- 1. The proposed work conforms to the prescriptive standards adopted by the Commission. RBMC §10-4.403(a)(1).**

The Commission adopted prescriptive standards for the treatment of specific characteristic features and also adopted by reference the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation ("SISR"). The proposed addition complies with the following prescriptive standards as to siding, retaining a porch, trim details and windows:

- *Exterior siding should conform to proper standards and authentic materials such as wood or clapboard siding are strongly encouraged.*

- The proposed siding will use clapboard siding that will be compatible with the existing siding.
- *The porch should be maintained in its original configuration, design, style and detailing.*
  - The proposed addition is in the rear and side and does not remove or conceal the front porch, which will remain.
- *Exterior trim details should harmonize a building with its neighbor or tie a new addition to the original.*
  - The proposed addition incorporates exterior trim that is consistent with the trim on the original house.
- Windows should be appropriately proportioned to be consistent with the original style.
  - The proposed addition has windows that are similarly proportioned as the windows on the existing house.

The proposed addition complies with the SISR criteria, including the ones that most closely relate to the proposed scope of work:

- *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided. (SISR #2)*

The proposed addition does not remove or obscure significant architectural elements of the residence. The characteristic features such as historic materials, craftsmanship and spatial relationships of the main house remain visible and intact. The front elevation with the front gable and off-centered porch are prominent, and the addition is to the secondary elevations in the rear and side.

- *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved. (SISR #5)*

The distinctive features of the residence are the covered porch, carriage house doors, trimmed eaves, clapboard siding, fixed and double hung windows with wide trim, front door with leaded glass transom and the attic window on the front gable. All of the noted distinctive features will remain as the primary elements of the front elevation. The proposed addition on the ground and second floor are recessed significantly towards the rear of the property, further maintaining the dominance of the front elevation.

- *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy the historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. (SISR #9)*

The historic materials on the original residence will remain unchanged.

The new work shall be differentiated from the old by utilizing a wider clapboard siding and will also have vertical trim elements where the addition is connected. The addition is recessed behind the existing front elevation. The new windows will be of the same dimensions with a slight variation of the panes.

The new work shall be compatible with the massing, size and scale in that it maintains the existing proportions of a larger ground floor base with a smaller second floor above.

The new work shall be compatible with the key architectural features of the existing residence by utilizing windows of the same size and proportions, and a wood horizontal clapboard siding material, and a similarly pitched roof. As described above the historic integrity of the property is being protected.

- *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired. (SISR #10)*

In order to be consistent with the historic character of the existing house, the design proposes to add a collection of smaller elements extended from existing parts of the house rather than creating disproportionate or boxy elements. The design uses the existing floor plan and massing as a starting point for the addition, with perpendicular extensions of the original shapes. These design considerations would facilitate returning the house to its original appearance by the removal of these additive masses, and the integrity of the original home would remain largely intact.

**2. *The proposed work will not detrimentally alter, destroy or adversely affect any exterior improvement or exterior architectural feature. RBMC §10-4.403(a)(2)***

The distinctive features of the residence are the covered porch, carriage house doors, trimmed eaves, clapboard siding, fixed and double hung windows with wide trim, front door with leaded glass transom and the attic window on the front gable. All of the noted distinctive features will remain as the primary elements of the front elevation. The proposed addition on the ground and second floor are recessed significantly towards the rear of the property, further maintaining the dominance of the front elevation. The proposed work does not detrimentally alter, destroy or adversely affect any exterior improvement or exterior architectural feature.

**3. *The proposed scope of work will retain the essential elements that make the resource significant. RBMC §10-4.403(a)(3)***

The proposed scope of work is an addition to the rear and western side of elevations of the house, which are secondary elevations. The addition does not change essential elements of the front elevation. The essential elements that make the resource significant are the main elements of the primary front elevation, including the covered porch, carriage house doors, trimmed eaves, clapboard siding, fixed and double hung windows with wide trim, front door with leaded glass transom and the attic window on the front gable. The essential elements are retained as the addition is to the rear and does not obscure or alter the features located on the primary elevation

## **THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

The proposed project is in compliance with the development standards of the R-3 Zone pursuant to

Section 10-2.514. The proposed addition complies with required setbacks, which include a front yard average setback of 18 feet (north along Garnet Street), side yard setbacks of 6-feet (west along Camino Real and east property line) and 15-foot rear yard setback (south property line). The building height of 24 feet is within the 30-foot maximum height. On-site parking spaces are not required due to conversion of the garage to an Accessory Dwelling Unit, being processed under a separate permit. For the reasons noted above, the residence with the proposed addition meets the development standards of the R-3 Zone.

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

As described within this report, the proposed 1,743 square foot two-story addition along the rear and side elevations will be compatible in design and materials to the original residence. The character-defining features of the original house will remain intact and the new addition while visible from the street will be significantly recessed and to the rear and subordinate to the existing front elevation. The Lowe House with its new living room, kitchen and additional bedroom on the first floor, and expanded Master Bedroom suite on the second floor, will be more functional for its owner and be in compliance with the Zoning Code, the Preservation Ordinance, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Draft Resolution  
CEQA Exemption Declaration  
Application for Certificate of Appropriateness  
Architectural Plans and Renderings