



Kaplan Chen Kaplan

Architects & Planners
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May 12, 2022

MEMO

To: Jason Muller
Beach City Capital

From: Pam O'Connor, Preservation Planner
Kaplan Chen Kaplan

Re: Historic Resources
100-132 N. Catalina Avenue, Redondo Beach, California

This memo addresses the concepts of historic significance of individual buildings and historic districts as well as an analysis of the compatibility of new construction adjacent to the eligible Catalina Avenue Commercial Historic District.

Analysis of Eligibility

The historic significance of an historic district is based on the ability of the buildings of the district to contribute together to create a cohesive district. The historic significance of an historic district is based on the attributes of buildings that contribute to that historic significance. Historic districts are seldom composed only of buildings that "contribute" to the historic district. Buildings that have been significantly altered and no longer communicate anything about their history are considered "non-contributing" buildings within an historic district. Buildings constructed outside of the period of historic significance of a district are also considered "non-contributing" buildings. Typically, an historic district qualifies for designation if more than 50 per cent of the buildings in the district are contributing buildings

An historic district's designation is not contingent on buildings that lie outside of the historic district's boundaries. Construction of new buildings within, adjacent to and behind an historic district will not result in an historic district losing historic status as that status is imparted through the historic buildings and is independent of either

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non-contributing buildings within a district, buildings adjacent to the district or new construction within the district.

In the case of the Catalina Avenue Commercial Historic District, the street front retail facades of the buildings within the district are significant as a district as they represent the story of commercial development in the City of Redondo Beach from the first half of the 20th Century.

The eligible Catalina Avenue Commercial Historic District consists of four contributing buildings (112, 124, 126, and 132 N. Catalina Avenue) and one non-contributing building (116 N. Catalina Avenue). The historic significance of this commercial district is embodied in the street fronts of the contributing buildings along a segment of a commercial block. With 80 percent of the buildings meeting the designation criteria as contributing buildings, the district qualified for formal designation as an historic district. The non-contributing building can be demolished without any adverse impact on the historic district. Existing buildings outside of the district's boundaries have no relationship or impact to the historic district. Construction of adjacent new buildings will not have any impact on the historic status of the contributing buildings of the historic district.

The parcel due east of the 100 N. Catalina Avenue corner vacant parcel contains a designated City of Redondo Beach Landmark, the Oklahoma Apartments at 305 Emerald Street. Along the north side of the 300 block of Emerald Street, to the east of the landmark Oklahoma Apartments building (1908), are 309 Emerald Street, a two-story late 20th Century residential building (1998) on a single parcel and to its east is 315 Emerald Street, a two-story late 20th Century residential building (1989) on three parcels. The existence of these late 20th Century buildings did not have any impact on the historic significance of the adjacent Oklahoma Apartments as the designation of the Oklahoma Apartments was based on the merits of the history of the building itself – and not contingent on the design or condition of any adjacent buildings. In fact, the historic designation was made in 1999 after the construction of these buildings.

In summary, the existence of adjacent non-historic properties does not have any impact on the eligibility of a potential historic resource.¹ The subject property or district is evaluated on its own merits as to whether it meets the criteria for designation as an historic resource.

¹ Except for potential historic districts which must have at least a majority of the buildings within the boundaries of the historic district eligible as contributing buildings.



Analysis of Compatibility

New construction adjacent to an historic resource (individual or district) or within an historic district needs to be evaluated for compatibility with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation state that:

- 1) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.
- 2) Related new construction should not destroy historic materials that characterize the property.
- 3) New work shall be differentiated from the old.
- 4) New work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

The Catalina Village project proposes to add new three-story residential apartment buildings behind the contributing buildings of the historic district and along the east lot line of those parcels. Also, a similar building is proposed for the 100 N. Catalina Avenue corner parcel (vacant) which on the Catalina Avenue side is adjacent to 112 N. Catalina Avenue, a contributing building to the historic district and is adjacent to an individual designated City of Redondo Beach historic resource, the Oklahoma Apartments at 305 Emerald Street.

- 1) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.

All the proposed new buildings will be sited on land that is currently vacant (or contain only non-historic, non-building ancillary structures). Thus, the new construction could be removed in the future without impairing the essential form and integrity of the contributing buildings of the district and their street front facades.

- 2) Related new construction should not destroy historic materials that characterize the property.



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The proposed new buildings will not destroy any historic materials that characterize the property as none of the historic contributing buildings will be demolished to make way for the new buildings.

3) New work shall be differentiated from the old;

All the new buildings proposed for the Catalina Village project are similar in height, massing, design, and materials. The style of the buildings is a contemporary coastal design. While inspired by traditional historic residential building styles represented in Redondo Beach, the design does not replicate any specific historic building style (and create a false historicism) and thus can be distinguished from historic buildings.

The subtle colors of the proposed buildings create a neutral backdrop behind the buildings of the commercial historic district. The ground slopes up to the east so the parallel street to the east is higher than N. Catalina Avenue. The backs of taller buildings on that block are visible as a backdrop currently; none are historic. In other words, some non-historic development would always be sited behind the commercial historic district. The similarity of the facades of the proposed buildings add to their neutrality as a backdrop.



4) New work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.



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Proposed building on 100 N. Catalina Avenue vacant parcel; adjacent to 112 N. Catalina Avenue, the southernmost contributing building to the historic district.

The building proposed for the corner parcel at 100 N. Catalina Avenue is adjacent to the 112 N. Catalina Avenue contributing building to the Catalina Avenue Commercial Historic District and on the perpendicular street, it is adjacent to the City of Redondo Beach designated landmark Oklahoma Apartments at 305 Emerald Street.

The height, massing and scale of proposed new construction matches the height of the original Masonic Hall, which was an aspirational statement regarding the future of Redondo Beach with its two-story design. The adjacency on the N. Catalina Avenue side is appropriate as the expectation of the commercial building was that it would be adjacent (without side setback) along the commercial corridor. The building's façade is articulated by a series of vertical modules which create a rhythm along the street front that is compatible with that of the commercial buildings of the block.

On the Emerald Street side, the setting of the along Emerald Street already includes multi-story multi-family buildings from the late 20th Century. These buildings did not have an adverse impact on the historic building – it was designated after those buildings had been constructed. Also the building at 315 Emerald Street is a late-20th Century coastal style design of similar materials to the proposed building. The proposed building at 100 N. Catalina Avenue provides a side yard setback that creates a separation between the proposed building and the Oklahoma Apartments as does the existing building to the east.



305 Emerald Street (1908) & 309 Emerald Street (1998)



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Sideyard setback between proposed building and designated Oklahoma Apartments building



315 Emerald Street (1989)

Conclusion

The proposed project complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. No designated or eligible historic resources will be adversely impacted by the proposed Catalina Village project.



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