



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

City of
REDLANDS

Incorporated 1888
35 Cajon Street, Suite 20
Mailing: P.O. Box 3005
Redlands, CA 92373
(909) 798 – 7555 ext. 2
lhokmollahi@cityofredlands.org

BRIAN DESATNIK
Development Services Director

**Development Services Department
Planning Division**

DATE: January 25, 2024

TO: Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission

FROM: Brian Foote, City Planner, Historic Preservation Officer
Laylee Hokmollahi, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT: Preliminary review of a proposal to demolish and reconstruct an accessory structure (cabana) damaged by an automobile collision located within the front yard setback adjacent to Highland Avenue. The subject property is located at 1205 W. Highland Avenue (APN: 0175-091-03-0000) within the Suburban Residential (R-S) District and the West Highland Avenue Historic & Scenic District (Historic District No. 2). The subject property is individually designated as Historic Resource No. 47.

PROPOSAL

The applicant has submitted a plan check for a partial demolition of the existing cabana, (portion recently damaged by motor vehicle collision) as well as reconstruction of the cabana (see Attachment A – Location Map & Aerial). The property owner has not yet submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (depending on the scope of work to be performed), and staff is bringing the matter to the Historic & Scenic Preservation Commission for preliminary review and discussion at the applicant's request.

BACKGROUND

Property History: The Historic Inventory Sheets (Attachment B) for the subject property describe the home as a large two-story Mediterranean home originally constructed in 1911. The following is the description from the Historic Inventory Sheet:



This house is a large two-story, white stucco building with window frames and other trim painted black. The roof is split shakes and the chimneys are white stucco. The driveway entry has square pillars on either side with black rod iron ornamental hanging lamps. The portico at the front entry (at the west side of the house) has an awning top held up by twisted pillars. French doors at the second floor front open onto a flat open porch with black iron railing. The main entry door is paneled wood with frosted glass small window set into the center. The glass is protected with black iron grill work. There is oval ornamental plaster work over the door with decorative scroll patio and gardens open to the north-east side and are protected from the street by large hedges. There are seven olive trees along the street in front, and eleven Italian cypress trees on the grounds which add to the Mediterranean feeling of this house.

Thomas Wadsworth (architect) and Davis Donald (builder) completed a major remodel of the house in 1924. The property has been known as the “Palmer House” and the “Hammer House” over the years. House Beautiful and Garden Magazine in 1924 wrote of the unique architecture of this Italian Villa and the beautiful gardens surrounding the home. The Historic Inventory Sheets focus attention on the main house and grounds, although the accessory structure (cabana) can be seen in the background in one of the photos.

In July 1987, Lawrence Longo, the property owner at the time, applied for the property to be registered with the Historic and Scenic property registry.

Permit History: On March 3, 2018, Certificate of Appropriateness No. 555 was approved for construction of a retaining wall at the rear of the property. On February 6, 2020, Certificate of Appropriateness No. No. 556 was approved legalizing an existing chain link fence with substantial landscape screening installed along the front property line.

Property Damage: On June 15, 2023, a single-vehicle automobile accident occurred at the intersection of W. Highland Avenue and S. San Mateo Street, which resulted in the vehicle destroying a section of unreinforced concrete perimeter wall in the front yard of the subject property as well as a portion of the cabana situated near the intersection. The cabana received significant damage to the northerly and westerly portions of the structure (including total destruction of one decorative column, approximately 170 square-feet of roof, and some weight-bearing portions of the walls). See Attachments C and D – Site Photos.

Since that time, the Municipal Utilities & Engineering Department has installed additional traffic control devices (signs and lighting) at that intersection to help prevent future traffic incidents. Staff continues to investigate other potential interventions for that intersection (which would be a separate City project and unrelated to the private property improvements).

SUMMARY

On December 14, 2023, the Building Division received a plan check proposing to demolish the damaged portions of the existing cabana plus other undamaged portions of the structure, specifically to:

- Demolish a portion of one (damaged) wall on the street-side that remains standing;
- Demolish three remaining historic double-pillar features (i.e., three undamaged decorative columns that support the remaining roof); and,
- Demolish the entirety of the remaining flat roof.

A new concrete wall will need to be constructed along the front property line (to replace the missing and remaining damaged sections of unreinforced wall adjacent to the street).

In addition, the plans show a substantial amount of new construction, including:

- New hip-style roof over the entire structure (increasing the height and prominence of the roof), with new roof tiles to match those on the main house;
- Four new paired columns to support the new roof structure, with decorative spiral design similar in appearance to the historic paired column design; and,
- New accent wood shade features (with herringbone pattern) underneath the new roof structure.

The property owner is requesting preliminary review and discussion by the Historic & Scenic Preservation Commission regarding potential consistency with the applicable guidelines of the city's *Historic Design Manual* and/or the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*. The property owner is seeking input on the scope and extent of work that can be done (with a Certificate of Appropriateness), given the property and main house is a designated historic property.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Location Map & Aerial Photo
- B. Historic Inventory Sheets
- C. Site Photographs (by staff)
- D. Site Photographs (by applicant)
- E. Project Plans