

CITY OF CARPINTERIA
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
Meeting of March 11, 2010

Agenda Item # 1

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PROJECT REVIEW

Project: 10-1540-ARB/CDP **Planner:** Nick Bobroff
Address: 4658 Ninth Street
APN: 003-242-014
Zoning: Single Family Residential (4-R-1)
Applicant: Tim Milham

Project Review: Conceptual
 Preliminary
 Final

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is the preliminary review of a request to demolish an existing single family residence and construct in its place, a new two-story prefabricated single family residence with attached two-car garage. The new three bedroom, three bathroom residence would have a total square footage of 2,022 square feet comprised of the following elements: first floor living area of 1,198 square feet; second floor living area of 468 square feet; and an attached two-car garage of 356 square feet. The residence features a raised, covered front porch of approximately 116 square feet. Maximum height of the residence would be 24.5 feet from the average finished grade.

In order to meet flood zone requirements and achieve positive drainage to the street, the rear of the lot must be raised approximately one vertical foot. A new retaining wall/perimeter fence would be constructed around the side and rear property lines. New hardscape (including a driveway and walkway) and site landscaping are proposed for the property. The existing fruit trees in the rear yard would be maintained.

Plans are attached as Exhibit A. Storypoles were erected the first week in March 2010.

PROJECT SETTING

The project site is located on the north side of Ninth Street, west of the Franklin Creek channel. The 4,860 square foot lot is presently improved with a 760 square foot single family residence. Until recently, a second 606 square foot single family residence also resided on the property, however the structure was in substandard condition and was recently demolished (January 2010) in order to abate a code violation case that came about as a result of the City's Single Family Rental Housing Inspection Program. Two mature fruit trees are planted in the rear yard and are proposed to be maintained as part of the subject project.

The project site is located in the Downtown/Old Town Neighborhood, which encompasses the residential neighborhoods and commercial areas bounded by Highway 101 to the north and the railroad tracks to the south and running east to west from Carpinteria Creek to the west end of the City. The small pocket of homes along the 4600 block of Ninth Street are mostly older single family homes on smaller lots and are zoned Single Family Residential (4-R-1). Immediately adjacent to the subject property is a two-story single family residence to the east, a two-story mixed use development to the north, a one-story single family residence to the west and a couple of one-story small apartment complexes to the south, across Ninth Street.

The site is zoned Single Family Residential (4-R-1) and has a Medium Density Residential land use designation (MDR).

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Carpinteria Municipal Code

The following table identifies the project’s conformance with Municipal Code requirements:

Standard	Requirement/Allowance	Proposal
Setbacks		
Front	40 feet from centerline of street or 10 feet from property line, whichever is greater.*	Porch: 30 feet 6 inches from CL, 13 feet from PL** SFD: 34 feet 6 inches from CL, 17 feet from PL**
Side (East)	3 feet*	5 feet
Side (West)	3 feet*	3 feet 6 inches
Rear	15 feet	22 feet
Height	30 feet	24 feet 6 inches
Building Coverage	35% max. (1,701 square feet)	32% (1,554 square feet)
Floor Area Ratio	40% max. (1,944 square feet)	36.7% (1,782 square feet)
Parking	2 spaces in a garage	2 spaces in a garage

*Note: The 4-R-1 Single Family Residential zone district allows for reduced front and side setback standards to account for the typically smaller lot sizes.

****Front Setback Requirement**

In the 4-R-1 Single Family Residential zone district, the required front setback is equivalent to 40 feet from street centerline or 10 feet from the property line, whichever is greater. The Ninth Street public right-of-way is 35 feet wide; the 40-foot setback from

Street centerline would therefore be equivalent to a 22-foot six-inch setback from the front property line.

The proposed site plan shows the front covered porch set 13 feet off the property line (equivalent to 30 feet from street centerline) and the living area of the residence set 17 feet back from the property line (equivalent to 34 feet six inches from street centerline). Therefore, the proposed site plan would not meet the 4-R-1 zone district development standards and must be revised. It appears the structure could be moved up to seven feet back in the lot (to the rear yard setback line), which would increase the front setback for the porch to 20 feet from the property line and 24 feet for the residence. The depth of the porch would need to be reduced by an additional two feet six inches in order to meet the required 22-foot six-inch front setback. This change to the porch dimensions would reduce the depth of the porch from eight feet eight inches to six feet two inches.

Other options, such as removing some of the square footage off the rear of the residence would allow the structure to be moved farther back in the lot, thereby allowing the entire front porch to meet the setback requirements. Alternatively, the porch columns could be moved back two and a half feet into the porch and the eaves could be supported with knee braces or a similar structural support to meet setback requirements while maintaining a larger sized porch. **The Board's input on revising the site layout and house/porch dimensions in order to meet the established front setback requirements would be appreciated.**

Design Review

The proposed residence is a two-story modular home with an attached two-car garage. The residence features a raised, covered porch facing the street. The attached two-car garage also faces the street but is set back (currently) 28 feet from the property line and utilizes two separate garage doors rather than one larger garage door. The house and porch are built upon a two-foot high raised foundation in order to meet flood zone requirements. The garage would be set at finished grade, approximately two feet lower in elevation. The second floor is generally centered over the structure and set back from the front and side elevations in order to achieve a wedding cake-like effect and meet applicable solar access/encroachment plane requirements. Hardi-plank siding is proposed for the exterior body of the structure and a 30-year asphalt shingle is proposed for the roofing material. Detailing includes faux window shutters on the street-front elevation and a circular gable vent facing the street. Color/material samples will be available at the meeting for the Board's review. **The Board's comments on the proposed architectural style and detailing of the residence would be appreciated.**

General Plan/Coastal Plan Neighborhood Policies

The project site has a General Plan/Local Coastal Plan designation of Medium Density Residential (MDR), and is zoned Single Family Residential (4-R-1). The City's Community Design Element of the General Plan contains both general over-arching policies and specific sub-area policies. The project site is in Design Sub-area 2 (Downtown/Old Town District).

CITYWIDE COMMUNITY DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Objective CD-1: *The size, scale and form of buildings and their placement on a parcel should be compatible with adjacent and nearby properties and with the dominant neighborhood or district development pattern.*

Objective CD-2: *Architectural designs based on historic regional building types should be encouraged to preserve and enhance the unique character of the City.*

The subject residence exhibits elements of a simple Craftsman or bungalow-style home, which fits with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, where there are many older, smaller homes. The house includes a raised, covered porch, which is a common design feature amongst the homes on Ninth Street. The Board may suggest some changes/revisions to the project in order to add more architectural interest/detailing or to improve the aesthetics of the home. Possible suggestions include increasing the depth of the roof eaves on the ground floor and adding additional windows or an eyebrow roof to the side elevations to break up the large, blank wall planes.

The total lot coverage/square footage of the residence comes close to the maximum allowed for the property, but given the relatively small lot size (4,860 square feet), the resulting 2,022 square foot home (including the two-car garage) is reasonably sized. The general layout of the home achieves many of the City's general design recommendations (i.e., incorporating a front porch, minimizing the prominence of the garage, making second floors smaller and secondary to the primary building mass on the ground floor, etc.). However, the site plan must be revised somewhat in order to meet the required front yard setback of 22 feet six inches from the property line (equivalent to the required 40 feet from street centerline).

Objective CD-3: *The design of the community should be consistent with the desire to protect views of the mountains and the sea (California Coastal Act of 1976 §30251).*

Views of the ocean are not available from Ninth Street. Mountain views are available along much of Ninth Street above the roofs of the mostly one-story homes. In the case of the subject property, the two-story mixed use building that shares the rear property line blocks much of the mountain view from Ninth Street. Views are still available, however, along the east side property line. The new residence would be two story, although the second floor would be situated just west of the center of the lot, thereby maintaining a single story element on the east side of the lot and largely preserving the existing mountain views.

Objective CD-5: *The streets of neighborhood interiors should be designed to be the "living rooms" of the neighborhood, where children and adults can safely play or walk. The design and details of streets, frontages and buildings should support this objective.*

Policy CD-5a: *Main entrances to homes should be oriented to the street. Entry elements such as porches, stoops, patios, and forecourts are encouraged. Such entry elements should be selected for their compatibility with the adjacent houses and general neighborhood pattern.*

The residence features a raised, covered 116 square foot front porch. The main entry to the home faces the street and aligns with a walkway, which leads from the public sidewalk to the porch. The second floor and the garage are set back from the frontage in order to focus attention on the porch/entry.

In order to comply with setback requirements, the structure will need to be moved back farther on the lot and it is likely the depth of the porch will need to be reduced or the porch design revised in order to meet setback requirements. Nonetheless, the porch appears to meet the basic intent of these Objectives and Policies.

Policy CD-5b: *Garages should not dominate views from any public street.*

Given the narrow lot width and minimum necessary dimensions for a garage, the garage would take up almost half of the width of the building frontage. However, in order to minimize its prominence, the garage is set back farther in the lot than the residence or porch and the garage would utilize two separate doors for the two spaces, rather than one larger door. If necessary, other decorative elements such as gable vents, dormers or a trellis could be added to the garage to provide additional interest.

Policy CD-5c: *Low walls, fences and hedges should be encouraged along the frontages to define the edge of the private yard areas, where appropriate.*

No fences or walls are proposed for the frontage, although the preliminary landscape plan calls out a row of bush anemone planted along the property line, which could serve as a hedge and help to define the edge of the private yard area.

Many of the residences along this stretch of Ninth Street do have fences or walls along their frontages. If the applicant desired, a low picket fence or similar material along the frontage could be appropriate.

Policy CD-5d: *Houses within a neighborhood may vary in materials and style, but strong contrasts in scale, color and roof forms should generally be avoided.*

While the proposed lot coverage and floor area ratio come close to reaching the maximum allowed for this property, the overall size and scale of the residence is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood development pattern. Additionally, the proposed exterior colors, materials and roof forms fit within the range of styles found in the downtown neighborhoods.

Objective CD-10: *Areas with attractive frontage designs should be maintained. New development should be carefully planned with frontage areas, which maintain and enhance the quality of Carpinteria's streetscape.*

Policy CD-10a: *Minor variations in front yard building alignments within a block are encouraged. Relatively steady setback patterns clearly define the public space of the street and reinforce small town character.*

The general site plan and frontage elevation meet the basic intent of these Objectives and Policies in that a large raised and covered porch faces the street and the second floor and garage are set back in the lot in order to help reduce their prominence. The residence may benefit from some additional detailing on the elevations visible from the street, particularly the side elevations which are relatively plain.

While the proposed front setback of 13 feet from the property line for the porch and 17 feet from the property line for the residence is generally in keeping with the established development pattern on Ninth Street, many of these homes are older and are considered legal non-conforming. In order to comply with current setback requirements, the home must be moved back on the lot as discussed previously as part of the zoning code analysis.

Objective CD-14: *Protect and preserve natural resources by reducing energy consumption.*

Implementation Policy 7: *Building orientation shall be designed to maximize natural lighting and passive solar heating and cooling.*

The residence faces south and takes advantage of some natural lighting for the kitchen, living room and upstairs bathroom. Rooms along the rear elevation also feature windows facing the north elevation. The side elevations are relatively plain, and it seems like there are opportunities for adding additional windows which server the dual purpose of providing natural light and adding architectural interest. One example would be adding a window or clerestory along the stairwell to the second floor.

Implementation Policy 8: *Landscaping shall be designed to maximize the use of the native drought-tolerant species and deciduous trees to shade building buildings in summer and allow for passive solar heating in winter.*

The preliminary landscape plan shows a mix of mostly drought-tolerant landscaping along the front yard, with the primary groundcover being common yarrow in place of the more typical sod. It is unclear at this time how the rear yard would be landscaped, although it is anticipated that some of the rear yard would likely be patio. **The Board's comments on the preliminary landscape plan would be appreciated.**

SUB AREA 2 OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Objective CDS2-1: *Preserve and strengthen the visual and physical connections between the downtown, beach, the salt marsh, mountains and the other neighborhoods and districts in the City.*