DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA DATE:	MAY 21, 2014
TO:	Chair Imboden and Members of the Design Review Committee
THRU:	Leslie Aranda Roseberry, Planning Manager
FROM:	Anna Pehoushek, Principal Planner
SUBJECT:	DRC NO. 4687-13 – AVONTI SALON

SUMMARY

The applicant is proposing to adaptively reuse a 2-story historic residential structure as a beauty salon. The project includes removal of a contemporary 702 sq. ft. addition to the historic structure, and construction of a new 1,395 sq. ft. addition at the rear of the structure. Site improvements will be undertaken as part of the project including establishment of a parking lot for the property and landscaping. The Design Review Committee (DRC) approved the project on September 18, 2013 subject to conditions. Condition of Approval 15 requires DRC approval of the final, detailed landscape plan.

RECOMMENDED ACTION – FINAL DETERMINATION

Staff is requesting that the DRC approve the final landscape plan subject to conditions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant/Owner:	Raymond Gall
Property Location:	206 West Almond Avenue, Old Towne Orange Historic District
General Plan Designation:	Old Towne Mixed Use-15 (0.5-1.0 FAR; 15 du/acre) (OTMIX-15)
Zoning Classification:	Old Towne Mixed Use-15 (Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan) (OTMU-15)(SP)
Existing Development:	Two-story, 1902 Victorian residential structure (vacant historic single family residence)
Property Size:	13,689 square feet
Associated Applications:	None
Previous DRC Review:	The project was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on August 21, 2013 and approved with conditions on September 18, 2013. The project was scheduled for review on April 2, 2014, and was continued at the request of the applicant.

PUBLIC NOTICE

No Public Notice is required for this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Class 1 – Existing Facilities) as the project involves rehabilitation of an existing structure and demolition and replacement of a small contemporary building addition.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project site is developed with a 2-story (31'2" high), contributing c. 1902 Victorian residential building that has been vacant for several years after ceasing use as a residence. A 1-story stucco addition was built at the rear of the house c. 1960. The design of this addition bears no relationship to the historic structure.

The proposed project involves renovation of the interior space of the historic structure for use as a beauty salon. The existing incompatible addition would be removed and replaced with a new larger addition that would serve as an extension of the salon space in the historic structure.

A parking lot would be developed to the west of the building. Improvements would include parking lot lighting, a trash enclosure and parking lot landscaping. Landscape installation is also proposed along the Almond Avenue, Olive Avenue, and rear portion of the lot.

As part of the project, the applicant will be removing the existing handicap ramp at the front porch of the historic residence and reconstructing the original concrete steps. Modifications are also proposed to the concrete steps on the west elevation of the historic structure, and to accommodate handicapped access.

EXISTING SITE AND AREA CONTEXT

The property is located on the southwest corner of West Almond Avenue and South Olive Street, and is a prominent feature of this intersection. The site is presently developed with the historic structure, with the remainder of the site primarily a dirt lot.

West of the site is a 2-story non-contributing contemporary multi-family structure. North of the site is a small public parking lot adjacent to the Orange Senior Center. Diagonally to the northeast is the Jensen Building parking lot. East of the site on Olive Street is a contributing single-story c. 1890 Classical Revival residence. South of the site on the west side of Olive is a contributing 2-story 1918 Craftsman residence. Continuing south on the 200 block of South Olive street are a combination of 1- and 2-story homes on either side of the street. The architectural styles represented on the street include Victorian, Craftsman, Craftsman Bungalow, and Hip Roof Cottage dating from 1905 to 1922.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Orange Municipal Code:

Orange Municipal Code (OMC) Section 17.10.070 establishes the general criteria the Design Review Committee should use when reviewing the project. This section states the following:

The project shall have an internally consistent, integrated design theme, which is reflected in the following elements:

1. **Architectural Features**.
    a. The architectural features shall reflect a similar design style or period.
    b. Creative building elements and identifying features should be used to create a high quality project with visual interest and an architectural style.
2. **Landscape**.
    a. The type, size and location of landscape materials shall support the project's overall design concept.
    b. Landscaping shall not obstruct visibility of required addressing nor shall it obstruct the vision of motorists or pedestrians in proximity to the site.
    c. Landscape areas shall be provided in and around parking lots to break up the appearance of large expanses of hardscape.
3. **Secondary Functional and Accessory Features**. Trash receptacles, storage and loading areas, transformers and mechanical equipment shall be screened in a manner, which is architecturally compatible with the principal building(s).

Old Towne Design Standards:

The Old Towne Design Standards defer to the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan for design guidance for properties falling within the Specific Plan's planning area. The Specific Plan provides guidelines for additions to historic buildings that are consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards. The Depot Specific Plan calls for pedestrian oriented treatment along the street level for properties with Old Towne Mixed Use zoning. The Old Towne Design Standards provide guidance regarding the use of materials for sidewalks, driveways and curbing, indicating that materials must match or be compatible in texture, color, and style with surrounding paving materials.

Secretary of Interior Standards:

The Secretary of Interior's Standards call for new additions to be differentiated from the historic structure and to be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of the property. Additions are also to be undertaken in a manner that maintains the essential form and integrity of the historic structure.

ANALYSIS/STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

Issue 1 – Planting Plan:

The proposed planting plan includes a combination of turf, groundcover, shrubs, vines and trees. The applicant has selected plant material that responds to the character of the historic structure, and is relatively limited in variety. A list of plant material is presented on Sheet LS-1.0 of the plans (Attachment 1).

In summary, the landscape program includes a formal boxwood hedge along the Almond Avenue frontage of the site that transitions to a waxleaf hedge along much of the Olive Street frontage. A geranium mix would be planted along the base of the hedges.

Four new King Palms at 4'-6' brown trunk height (BTH) would be planted in the front yard area south of the walkway to the main entrance of the historic structure. King Palms are also proposed in the parking lot area, and would be planted in the landscape fingers as well as in the planter adjacent to the Almond Avenue sidewalk, at the southwest corner of the parking lot, and at the building entrance off of the parking lot.

A number of Queen Palms at 4'-6' BTH are also proposed in the parking lot area. They would be planted in an alternating pattern with the King Palms along the west property line from the Almond Avenue sidewalk to the location of the trash enclosure.

Between the palms along the west property line, the applicant proposes an alternating pattern of Night Blooming Jessamine, geranium, and Wisteria. In the parking lot landscape fingers, as well as the planter adjacent to the Almond Avenue sidewalk, an assortment of Night Blooming Jessamine, Lilly of the Nile, and Wisteria are proposed. The Wisteria would be supported by tree stakes, with the intent that they be allowed to grow into the parking lot palm trees and light poles to create an organic "old fashioned" garden aesthetic. Geraniums are proposed along the front of the east-facing spaces in the parking lot.

Foundation plantings include Centradenia Purple Showers, geranium, Wisteria, and Night Blooming Jessamine. Here, the Wisteria would be planted at the base of new 6" by 6" redwood posts spaced approximately 9 feet apart supporting a trellis. Three of these trellises are proposed along the east edge of the parking lot walkway.

St. Augustine grass would be planted in the front and side yard areas to the north and east of the historic structure and addition.

Resolution:

Staff believes that the proposed planting palette is visually appropriate for the project. The palette and planting plan provide a formal treatment for the front and side yard areas adjacent to the Almond Avenue and Olive Street sidewalks. The plant selection also utilizes materials commonly associated with historic development (e.g., palms, Wisteria, Night Blooming Jessamine, St. Augustine).

Staff is seeking feedback from the DRC on the proposed Wisteria along the west property line and related support stakes. Given the rangy, vigorous growth habit of Wisteria, staff believes that a more substantial and durable method of support is needed or that the Wisteria should be replaced with an alternative plant material per Condition of Approval 11. Staff is also seeking DRC feedback on the overall planting program.

Issue 2: Pilasters:

The applicant is proposing two 7'3" river rock pilasters flanking the walkway leading to the building entrance off of the Olive Street sidewalk. These pilasters do not support a fence or wall. Rather, they are proposed as a vertical landscape element that marks an access point to the site. They are technically neither a fence nor a wall. The Code, Specific Plan and Design Standards are silent with respect to decorative landscape features.

Resolution:

Staff is requesting feedback from the DRC on the proposed pilasters. Because of their tall height and placement at a highly visible Old Towne intersection staff recommends that either these pilasters be reduced in height not to exceed 42" or completely eliminated. Should the pilasters remain, staff recommends Condition of Approval 9 that requires field verification of the stone matching the historic building foundation prior to initiating construction of the pilasters.

Issue 3 – Hardscape:

The applicant is proposing new concrete walkways around the historic structure and new addition. A herringbone paving pattern of pavers or bricks is proposed at the point the walkways that lead to the front porch of the historic residence meet the sidewalk on Almond Avenue and Olive Street. This accent feature is wider than the walkway it connects to on the Olive Street frontage. While the use of brick as a walkway surface is found elsewhere in Old Towne, staff believes that a simple concrete walkway would be most representative of the historic walkway treatment for the house. Staff is seeking direction from the DRC on the use of brick as an accent element adjacent to the sidewalks.

A large concrete patio is proposed on the east side of the property. There is a secondary pathway leading from the featured labeled "concrete porch" to the Olive Street sidewalk.

Resolution:

Staff is requesting feedback from the DRC on the proposed hardscape. To ensure compliance with the Old Towne Design Standards, staff has included Condition 13 requiring the applicant to demonstrate that the concrete, brick, and any other paving materials be compatible with the color and texture of brick and concrete being retained at the property, as well as the concrete on adjacent public sidewalks.

Issue 4 - Parking Lot Lighting

The applicant is proposing an upright fixture to provide the source of light at the top of the parking lot light poles. The fixture would be installed on a decorative arm at the top of the light pole. The light pole itself is of a style that is compatible with the historic structure, as well as other historically referenced City light poles in Old Towne.

Resolution:

Staff is seeking confirmation from the DRC on the proposed parking lot lighting.

ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The landscape plan does not require review by the Staff Review Committee.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

The courts define a "Finding" as a conclusion which describes the method of analysis decision makers utilize to make the final decision. A decision making body "makes a Finding," or draws a conclusion, through identifying evidence in the record (i.e., testimony, reports, environmental documents, etc.) and should not contain unsupported statements. The statements which support the Findings bridge the gap between the raw data and the ultimate decision, thereby showing the rational decision making process that took place. The "Findings" are, in essence, the ultimate conclusions which must be reached in order to approve (or recommend approval of) a project. The same holds true if denying a project; the decision making body must detail why it cannot make the Findings.

The Findings are applied as appropriate to each project. Based on the following Findings and statements in support of such Findings, staff recommends the DRC recommend Planning Commission approval of the project with recommended conditions.

1. *In the Old Towne Historic District, the proposed work conforms to the prescriptive standards and design criteria referenced and/or recommended by the DRC or other reviewing body for the project (OMC 17.10.070.F.1).*

   With adoption of conditions of approval, the proposed project addresses the *Old Towne Design Standards* through the use of plant and hardscape materials that are compatible with the historic structure. The brick, concrete, and stonework associated with the hardscape elements draw from the building materials of the historic structure and surrounding Old Towne sidewalks. The plant palette includes trees, shrubs, vines, and groundcover commonly found in established Old Towne landscapes.

2. *In any National Register Historic District, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines (OMC 17.10.07.F.2 and OTDS.)*

   The proposed building rehabilitation and addition associated with the overall Avonti Salon project have been found to be in compliance with the *Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines* by the Design Review Committee on September 18, 2013. The site is presently largely void of landscaping. The proposed landscape and hardscape program is compatible with the historic character of the site and surrounding historic district properties. The plant palette draws from trees, shrubs, vines, and groundcover commonly found growing at Old Towne properties, and in common use in the early 1900s. With conditions of approval, hardscape materials consist of concrete, brick, and stone that are consistent with the building materials of the historic structure and surrounding Old Towne sidewalks.

3. *The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of an internally consistent, integrated design theme and is consistent with all adopted specific plans, applicable design standards, and their required findings (OMC 17.10.07.F.3).*

With conditions of approval the proposed landscape and hardscape program is compatible with the historic character of the site and surrounding historic district properties. The plant palette draws from trees, shrubs, vines, and groundcover commonly found growing at Old Towne properties, and in common use in the early 1900s. With conditions of approval, hardscape materials consist of concrete, brick, and stone that are consistent with the building materials of the historic structure and surrounding Old Towne sidewalks.

4. *For infill residential development, as specified in the City of Orange Infill Residential Design Guidelines, the new structure(s) or addition are compatible with the scale, massing, orientation, and articulation of the surrounding development and will preserve or enhance existing neighborhood character (OMC 17.10.07.F.4).*

   The proposed project and associated landscaping is not an infill residential project, and is therefore not subject to the *City of Orange Infill Residential Design Guidelines*.

CONDITIONS

Staff recommends the Design Review Committee recommend Planning Commission approval of DRC 4687-13 subject to the conditions listed below and any conditions that the Design Review Committee deems appropriate to support the required findings and ensure the preservation of community aesthetics:

1. All construction shall conform in substance, and be maintained in general conformance, with plans labeled Attachment 2 (stamp dated April 28, 2014) and as recommended or modified by the Design Review Committee.
2. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall pay all of the applicable Development Impact Fees in accordance with the most current fee schedule. Building permits shall be obtained for all construction work, as required by the City of Orange, Community Development Department's Building Division. Failure to obtain the required building permits will be cause for revocation of this design review permit.
3. These conditions shall be reprinted on the second page of the construction documents when submitted to the Building Division for the plan check process.
4. Subsequent modifications to the approved landscape plan shall be submitted for review and approval to the Community Development Director or designee. Should the modifications be considered substantial, the modifications shall be reviewed by the City's Design Review Committee.
5. The applicant agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the City, its officers, agents and employees from any and all liability or claims that may be brought against the City arising out of its approval of this permits, save and except that caused by the City's active negligence. The City shall promptly notify the applicant of any such claim, action, or proceedings and shall cooperate fully in the defense.
6. The applicant shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, including all City regulations. Violation of any of those laws in connection with the use will be cause for revocation of this permit.

7. Design Review No. 4687-13 shall become void if not vested within two years from the date of approval. Time extensions may be granted for up to one year, pursuant to OMC Section 17.08.060.
8. In conjunction with construction, all activity will be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. No construction activity will be permitted on Sundays and Federal holidays.
9. The applicant shall reduce the height of the two decorative pilasters along the Olive Street frontage to no more than 42". Prior to assembly of the stonework for pilaster construction the applicant shall contact Planning Division staff to field verify the color scheme of the stones to match the stonework along the foundation of the existing residence.
10. The applicant shall plant one street tree along South Olive Street. The applicant shall coordinate with the City's Street Tree Coordinator on the tree selection and placement. If space is available, the applicant shall install a new Queen Palm along the Olive Street frontage.
11. The applicant shall revise the landscape plan to provide a more substantial method of support for the Wisteria planted along the western property line, or replace the Wisteria with an alternative plant material such as a shrub or small tree.
12. Plant material and irrigation shall be installed in accordance with City Landscape Plans and Specifications. Details about plant installation and irrigation shall be presented on the final set of Building Division drawings for review and confirmation by City Staff.
13. The applicant shall demonstrate that the concrete, brick, and any other paving materials used in the hardscape areas for the project be compatible with the color and texture of brick and concrete being retained at the property, as well as the concrete on adjacent public sidewalks. This shall be verified by the Planning Division prior to the issuance of building permits for the addition.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Plans stamp dated April 28, 2014
2. Design Review Committee Minutes, September 18, 2014
3. Design Review Staff Report, September 18, 2014.

c: Richard Gall
1165 Saling Way
Laguna Beach, CA 92651