



# *DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE*

## AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA DATE: JUNE 18, 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**

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### **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. The DRC reviewed the landscape plan on May 21, 2014 and continued the item for plan refinement.

### **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 DRC 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. The landscape plan was reviewed on May 21, 2014 and continued based on the need for plan revisions.

## **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. A new patio and access ramps are proposed on the east elevation.

## **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**

The DRC commented extensively on the landscape plan on May 21. Detailed meeting minutes are provided in Attachment 2. In summary, Committee members indicated that the plans should be revised to address the following:

- Plan legibility.
- The height and material of the pillars proposed at the walkway access from Olive Street.
- The use of concrete similar to the Old Towne concrete formula and finish for project walkways, depiction of concrete joints and scoring, and location of permeable paving.
- Adequacy of planting areas and potential footing conflicts in relation to plant material selection and placement.
- Appropriateness of plant selection (type and size) in relation to applicant's stated design goals, planting conditions, and growth habit with particular focus on the palm trees, Wisteria, boxwood cones, and Night Blooming Jessamine.
- Parking lot lighting placement in relation to tree locations, and fixture selection in relation to the understated historic architectural style and light conflicts with neighboring residences.
- Information about guard rail locations and simplification of the railing style.
- Provision of a stucco finish on the trash enclosure and planting of a vine.
- Detailing of trellis/ground connections, ramp profile in relation to building elevations, and fountain.

### **Issue 1 – Planting Plan:**

The proposed planting plan has been refined and clarified in response to DRC feedback. A list of plant material is presented on Sheet L-1 of the plans (Attachment 1). The proposed planting plan has been revised as follows:

- **Palm Trees:** The use of palm trees in the planting plan has been scaled back to be concentrated along the west property line and along the eastern property frontage. All proposed palms would have a 6' minimum brown trunk height. A number of palm trees in the parking lot have been replaced with London Plane trees to serve as a shade tree, and also be consistent with similar trees planted in the surrounding historic neighborhood and as City street trees.

The concentration of palms at the northeast corner of the site has been modified to provide a formal grouping of four Queen Palms in the front yard area, with two additional palms spaced further to the south.

- **Wisteria:** The proposed landscape plan continues to include Wisteria along the west property line. Under the revised design, the Wisteria would be supported by 9' tall by approximately 9' long trellises in this location. The Wisteria along the parking lot walkway at the west elevation of the historic structure would be supported by similar

trellises. The applicant is proposing a large trellis over the ramp and stair area on the west elevation to support Wisteria in that location as well.

Wisteria would also be planted on a trellis supported by Arroyo stone pilasters adjacent to the walkway leading to the main entry from Olive Street. This feature would serve as a point of entry into the garden space off of the patio on the east elevation.

- **Night Blooming Jessamine:** The applicant has focused the use of Night Blooming Jessamine adjacent to the south property line wall, immediately west of the Olive Street sidewalk. In this location, the mature size of the plant will serve to soften the appearance of the block wall along the south property line as viewed from the project site and Olive Street sidewalk.
- **Olive Street Hedge:** The applicant proposes a 6' high Wax Leaf Privet hedge along the Olive Street frontage to create privacy and a visual separation from the intersection for the patio and garden space. Because the Olive Street frontage is technically the side yard of the property, and the property is zoned Old Towne Mixed Use in the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan, the height of the hedge may be greater than 42". However, due to the historic residential character of the property, and the long-standing relationship between the street elevations of the house and its surrounding, staff believes that obstructing visibility of the historic structure with a tall hedge close to the sidewalk and street fundamentally alters the relationship between the building and its historic context.

#### Resolution:

Staff believes that the revised planting plan largely responds to the feedback provided by the DRC, and is generally appropriate for the site. The support trellises for the Wisteria, adjustment to the use of palm trees, and integration of canopy trees are compatible with the historic character of the site, and also address DRC comments.

Staff believes that enclosing the front yard area north and east of the proposed patio changes the established relationship the historic structure has had with Almond Avenue and Olive Street, and diminishes its visual prominence. Staff recommends that the boxwood hedge along the Almond Avenue frontage be continued along Olive Street in order to preserve the visibility of the historic structure, and provide a formal edge between the sidewalk and property. Staff recognizes that this approach does not accommodate the privacy desired for the patio, it does not interfere with the fundamental operations of the salon. Staff is seeking feedback from the DRC on the proposed hedge in relation to the historic building and its context.

#### Issue 2: Hardscape Features

- **Parking Lot Planters:** The applicant has made adjustments in the revised plan to provide space for tree planting along the south property line (between parking spaces 15 and 16) that avoids the footing of the block wall. The plans have also been revised to eliminate the planter in front of the parking spaces on the east side of the parking lot in order to eliminate vehicle-landscape conflicts.

- **Walkways:** The landscape plan has been revised to identify scoring patterns and note material and finish. While the DRC suggested that the transition areas from the public sidewalk to project walkways be of a concrete color and finish similar to the City's Old Towne sidewalk finish, the applicant is presenting these areas as either authentic used brick to match the brick on the historic structure or top cast concrete.
- **Ramp Profile:** The applicant has provided information about the profile of the ramps, stairs and patio in relation to the building elevations for the DRC's reference (Attachment 1).
- **Miscellaneous:** The revised plans incorporate a 4" mow strip at the bottom of the patio steps in response to DRC comments. Additionally, the rear yard area between the addition and the block wall will be gravel for ease of maintenance and permeability.

Resolution:

Staff is seeking final feedback on the hardscape program for the site, with particular attention to the use of brick in the walkway transition areas, as well as the elimination of the planter along the vehicle overhang area on the east edge of the parking lot. To ensure compliance with the Old Towne Design Standards, staff has included Condition 12 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 3: Pillars:

The pillars originally proposed at the project walkway leading off of Olive Street have been relocated and modified. Specifically, the pillars now support a trellis upon which Wisteria would be growing, and would be positioned perpendicular to Olive Street, and setback outside of the corner cutoff area to serve as a gateway into the screened side yard and patio area. The overall height of this feature would be approximately 9'.

Resolution:

Staff believes that the revised design and position of the pillar/trellis feature is acceptable, and would be an attractive site amenity as viewed from Almond Avenue. 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. It should be noted, however, that the appropriateness of this feature is linked to its installation of the hedge proposed along the Olive Street frontage of the site (discussed in Issue 1 above). Without the hedge, the trellis element may not have an appropriate setting. Therefore, staff suggests that the DRC ultimately consider the trellis feature in conjunction with the ultimate determination about the hedge.

Issue 4 – Guard Rails:

The design of the guard rail has been simplified from the originally proposed ornamental railing to simple vertical steel posts with a plain top rail in response to DRC feedback. The railing would be painted black.

Resolution:

Staff is seeking confirmation from the DRC on the proposed railing design.

Issue 5 - Parking Lot Lighting

In response to the DRC's guidance to consider a simple, historically referenced pole and fixture style, the applicant has revised the parking lot lighting to be of a style that is compatible with the City's Old Towne street lights. The fixture would be shielded where in the one instance where it is located along the south property line.

Resolution:

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

Issue 6 – Trash Enclosure

The revised plans include a smooth stucco finish on the trash enclosure per the DRC's feedback. A vine has not been proposed as an additional method of softening the appearance of the trash enclosure.

Resolution:

Staff is seeking confirmation from the DRC on the revised trash enclosure, and whether or not a vine should also be planted to cover the enclosure wall.

Issue 7 - Fountain

The applicant has included a fountain selection in the revised plans. The fountain would be a simple two-tiered fountain in a traditional design measuring approximately 5' in height. The fountain would be located in the front yard area outside of the corner cutoff.

Resolution:

Staff is seeking confirmation from the DRC on the proposed fountain.

**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 materials 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 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 1 (stamp dated May 29, 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. 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.
11. 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.
12. The applicant shall demonstrate that the paving materials used in the hardscape areas for the project be compatible with the color and texture of concrete, stone, and brick 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 May 29, 2014
  2. Design Review Committee Minutes, May 21, 2014
  3. Design Review Committee Staff Report, May 21, 2013 (including Design Review Committee Minutes, September 18, 2014 and Design Review Staff Report, September 18, 2014.)
- c: Richard Gall  
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