

Honorable Mayor and City Council, City of Riverside, Ca

Re. Planning Case P19-0487 (Certificate of Appropriateness, Cultural Heritage Board) Letter of Appeal

Please let this letter serve as a request to appeal the Cultural Heritage Board denial of November 20, 2019, regarding the remodel/addition of the home at 4674 Beacon Way, Riverside.

At the CHB hearing of October 16, 2019, the Planning staff (Scott Watson) presented our request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for "after-the-fact" demolition of portions of the existing residence's main level and garage and the expansion of the subterranean basement level. The staff indicated that the design of the proposed addition and remodel is considered a modern interpretation of the "Farmhouse Ranch architectural style". The property is located within the Mt. Rubidoux Historic District but is **not** considered a historically significant house because of the age of the home and the fact that no significant architectural qualities contributed to the original design or its history. The home is considered a "non-historical" structure but is subject to CHB review/approval with the Certificate. The remodel is subject to the Guidelines that are associated with the District home remodel and additions of "non-contributing" residences and should be sensitive to the "Neighborhood Zone" in which the home is located. The residence is located at the top of Beacon Way and is among six out of seven "non-contributing" residences and two vacant lots on Beacon Way. This immediate vicinity constitutes the "Neighborhood Zone" which will dictate the design guidelines and constraints for the remodel and addition.

The **Design Guidelines** permits construction of contemporary buildings within the District following specific criteria that is compatible with its "Neighborhood Zone". The Guidelines Section 8.5 (Design Guidelines for Contemporary Buildings) articulates specific criteria for remodels similar to the proposed improvements. They are summarized below:

1. Articulate Large Masses:

- The proposed design specifically avoided a "box-like" design by providing horizontal and vertical articulation of the new elevations with deep shadow relief and wood

board siding wall materials. The design also introduced various lower arcade structures to break up the massing.

2. Avoid Blank Walls:

- The home is articulated on all four sides even though the public will primarily only view the street elevation due to the extreme steep slopes and limited vantage opportunities the site presents. All walls are designed to avoid blank wall appearances.

3. Retain Scale of Components:

- The proposed remodel/addition design specifically retained the scale of the existing home. The existing home was a three-bedroom residence and single car garage with extensive roof overhangs, breezeway area, and covered patios. The new proposed two-bedroom home and double car garage expansion are almost entirely within the roof overhead projection of the existing roof except for the expansion of the low roof Master Suite of about 400 SF. The ridge of the new roof is only about 8' higher than the ridge of the original home. The existing homes surrounding the lot and within the Neighborhood Zone of non-contributing homes are of equivalent scale and size.

4. Maintain Similar Proportions:

- The proposed design specifically addresses the unique site conditions of the 360-degree views. The existing extensive patios around the home are being preserved and the remodel/addition will occupy the area directly above the existing lower supporting sub-basement levels which will remain.

5. Limit New Emphasis:

- We introduced various low-roof arcade structures to emulate the front eave line character of the existing home to break up the massing and to be compatible with the adjacent homes within the Neighborhood Zone. The function layout of the remodeled home is very similar to

the original residence layout and preserves the character of the entry arcade that exists in the original plan and elevation.

6. Use Compatible Textures:

- The exterior building wall materials are simple wood siding and stone veneer and will be compatible with the adjacent homes within the Neighborhood Zone.

7. Use Related Colors:

- The original home was white colored plaster and the new home will be painted white wood siding which will be compatible with the adjacent homes within the Neighborhood Zone.

8. Screen Mechanical Equipment:

- No mechanical equipment will be visible on the exterior of the home or the street frontage.

9. Provide Compatible Roof Lines:

- The roof line ridge is only about 8' higher than the original ridge line and is compatible with the appropriate buildings in the Neighborhood Zone. Lower arcade roofs are introduced to articulate the design and to break up taller walls to be comparable to the existing home.

The Planning staff recommended approval of our application at the October 16, 2019 CHB meeting, and found that our proposed design met the design criteria of the Guidelines and was appropriate to the Neighborhood and District. Their findings and recommendations are summarized below:

- The proposed residential style (Modern Farmhouse Ranch) is consistent with other non-contributing structures within the Historic District and the residence uses materials consistent with those found throughout the District including the proposed siding and stone.
- The proposed single-story remodel/addition matches the height, scale, and massing of the existing residence. The adjacent

residences are two and three-story homes in height and the proposed project is consistent with the height, scale, and massing of the adjacent Cultural Resources.


- The proposed residence and garage are situated primarily in the same locations as the original home being replaced. The perimeter and limits of the improvements will be contained within the boundaries of the existing patio decks and retaining walls. There will be no change in relationship to other properties within the District.
- The proposed home does not adversely affect important architectural, historical, cultural, and archaeological features since the new structure is situated directly over the layout of the existing home and no new work is proposed beyond the perimeter of the retaining wall boundaries.
- The proposed Project is constant with the Citywide Residential Historic District Guidelines and compatible with the immediate neighborhood residences.
- The proposed Project is consistent with the Principles of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of Historical Properties and will be compatible with other residences throughout the District in terms of scale, massing and use of materials. The proposed features of the Farmhouse Ranch style exist throughout the District and will be consistent with the neighborhood.
- The proposed residence complies with the development standards of the Zoning Code.

The CHB did not agree with the proposed recommendation for approval of the Certificate and assigned a subcommittee to meet with the Owner and Architect to see if certain design features could be modified to meet their expectations for the proposed remodel/addition. Thus, continuing the review until the November 20th meeting. On October 17th I notified the Planning staff (Scott Watson) that the Owner would be willing to meet with the assigned subcommittee as soon as possible to discuss potential modifications to the Project. On October 21st we were informed that the assigned subcommittee would **not be able to meet** until after the next November hearing date and that the Owner would need to be present to acknowledge his willingness to meet.

11/27/19

At the November 20, 2019 meeting the Owner indicated that he and the Architect would be willing to meet ASAP to get the Project moving forward. After a lengthy CHB discussion the Board withdrew the invitation to have the subcommittee meet for potentially modifying the design. This was extremely surprising and regrettable since the Project application for the Certificate of Appropriateness was subsequently denied by the board at that meeting without the opportunity to obtain additional guidance on the elements of the design that they found incompatible.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Neal', written in a cursive style.

Randy Neal
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