

October 15, 2025

Design Review Committee Meeting

Item # 3.1 Design Review No. 5156

Design Review Committee

Meeting Time: 10-15-25 17:30

eComments Report

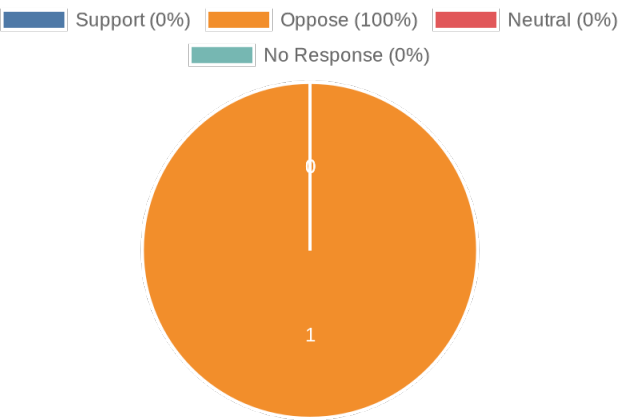
Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Design Review Committee	10-15-25 17:30	7	3	0	1	2

Design Review Committee
10-15-25 17:30

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
2. PUBLIC COMMENTS	1	0	1	0
3.1. A request to demolish the existing structures and construct a new single-family residence and detached garage at 405 E. Toluca Avenue. (Design Review No. 5156).	2	0	0	2

Agenda Item: eComments for 2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Overall Sentiment

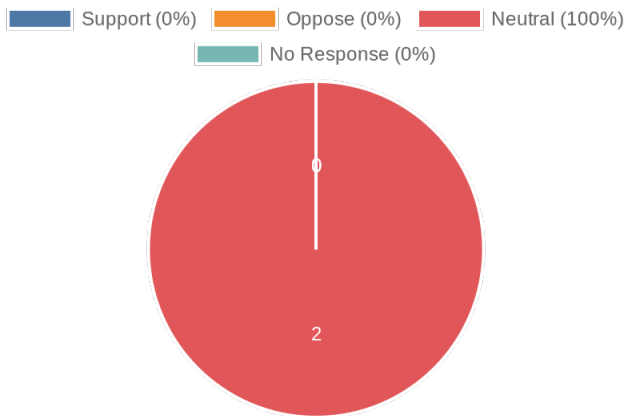


Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 9:57am 10-15-25

We are owners of the property across the street at 340 E Toluca. We would like for consideration to be made NOT to extend the sidewalk as it directly impacts access on our street. Large vehicles already have a challenging time turning on Toluca and typically end up in our driveway; extending the sidewalk would prohibit access and push people into our driveway further. The rendering also very much looks like a multi unit property and detracts from the neighborhood and the existing properties.

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:42pm 10-14-25

The proposed curb parallel to Toluca Ave. directly impacts access to my property at _____ which I can only access via the easement on the property of 415 East Toluca. The entrance to the easement is already very narrow. We kindly ask that an alternative to the hardscape curb be considered to prevent the hazard of accidentally "jumping" the curb and damaging our tires or wheels, especially in wet conditions or at night when visibility is low.

Linda Maxwell-Jordan

Location:

Submitted At: 4:12pm 10-14-25

I am very disappointed in the poor design of the proposed building. The renderings look like a cross between a trailer home and an apartment building. The garage in the back looks more like a house than the house itself. There is absolutely no architectural interest or style or charm. The front door should face the street. Since it does have an attached JADU, is it confirmed that it will be owner-occupied? Because right now it looks like a multi-family rental complex instead of a single family residence.

To the Design Review Committee:

Our house is located at _____ and we share the eastern property line with the project site at 405 E. Toluca Avenue. We have concerns with the project as it is proposed.

History of the Property

Up until the early 1950s, the project property, 415 and 435 E Toluca Avenue were all part of a farm/orchard, that can be seen on historic aerials. That is why these three homes are in the 400s, while the rest of Toluca Avenue addresses are in the 300s. The existing house on the site built in 1935 was part of the farm/orchard. The house at 415 was built and oriented around the location of the existing house at 405 in 1957.

Proposed Sidewalk Extension

The proposed sidewalk extension is located over an existing access easement for 405 and 415 E. Toluca Avenue. I have attached the parcel map from the title report that shows the existing easements. The reason for the existing layout of the site is due to this easement.

Toluca Avenue is a sub-standard street that only allows for parking on one side of the street, and dead ends into the shared driveway for 415 and 435. As the street is currently constructed, anytime there is a delivery truck, or a car parked on the wrong side of the street, or a trash truck, it blocks access to the street. I have attached a picture of the existing end of street so you can see the challenges it poses.

If the sidewalk is constructed, it would be incredibly challenging to turn a car around at the end of the street. It would also make accessing our driveway more challenging, and would impede the existing easement. Additionally, there is no information on how the sidewalk would terminate, since the plans are not correct (see more details on that below), and the sidewalk and curb would abut an existing block wall.

We request that the sidewalk extension not be included in the project, since it impedes our easement, and creates unsafe conditions on the street by narrowing the end of the street with no turnaround. Improvements should be further reviewed in conjunction with Public Works to ensure that all deed restrictions are complied with prior to issuance of any demolition or construction permits within the easement area.

Errors on the Plans

- The site plan does not show the correct end of Toluca, it actually ends sooner, and the end of the street, where it is concrete instead of asphalt, belongs to 340 and 405 Toluca, with access easements for 415 and 435 Toluca.
- The site plan (both proposed and existing) shows an existing curb and gutter and front P/L that do not exist. I've included pictures so you can see the existing conditions.
- The plans show the sidewalk and curb continuing onto our property, where there is an existing block wall, and no sidewalk.
- The 3-foot block wall along the eastern property line continues to the southern edge of the property (it is shown ending before the proposed sidewalk on the site plan), and while the wall is shown on their property, it is entirely on our property.

- Existing mature orange tree called out on the plans is not in the correct location. The trunk is at least 5 feet from the property line and cannot be retained as called out in the proposed plans.
- The palm tree called out on the plans in the northeast corner of the site is on our property, not 405.
- The site plans and landscape plans do not match, and the site plan looks to have more landscape area proposed than is included in the landscape plan.

Site Layout

- The oversized garage is not consistent with other detached garages in the neighborhood. The Design Guidelines state, “In general, secondary buildings should be no taller than the primary building. In limited areas, secondary buildings may be taller than primary buildings, if this condition is already typical of the streetscape of the surrounding blocks.” However, there is not a typical condition on the street where the detached garages are taller than the primary structure. There is nothing architecturally that differentiates the two buildings, besides the garage door.

The Guidelines also say, “New garages and accessory structures should be similar in size, scale, and design to historic garages and accessory structures in the historic districts,” and “New garages or accessory structures should not compete visually with the historic residence and should be subordinate in height, width, and area in comparison to the existing primary structure.” The proposed garage/workshop is much larger than the other detached garages in the neighborhood.

- The proposed site plan has a lack of relief along eastern property line. The long rectangular building runs along the majority of the property line with a small break, and then the garage, all at the same 5-foot setback with no articulation. This is inconsistent with the surrounding development, and the historic development of the site.
- As seen in the landscape plan, there is very little yard space in the project, most of the backyard space is taken up by the large garage/workshop and driveway and garage access. The backup distance for garage complies with code minimum, but note that turning movement if someone did not want to back down the driveway in reverse is difficult and would encroach into open space area to make a three-point turn.
- Trash cans are shown in the east side yard on the site plan. It doesn’t necessarily make sense to have them on the opposite side of the building from unit entrances and the driveway. We recommend moving them to the west side of the garage where they would be further from the living area of the adjacent house and not a potential nuisance to either adjacent property.
- The only site lighting is shown on Sheet A-07. There is no side yard site lighting shown on the plans. If added later, it could potentially shine directly into front and bedroom windows at 415 due to the orientation of the two houses.
- Moving the house significantly forward changes our home’s orientation to the street. As discussed above, our house was placed on the site taking into consideration the existing setback of the 1935 house. Bringing it forward means that our front porch will now be facing their house, instead of the front yard and street.

Design

- The proposed FAR for the project is higher than the average FAR for the street, it is actually 0.34 (it's calculated as 0.339), where the average is 0.24. While only one tool for determining capability with the historic neighborhood, the design and layout of the structures (long narrow rectangular structure, with oversized garage) are not consistent with development of the surrounding single-family residences and duplexes. I would also like to confirm how the FAR was calculated. The definition for FAR (OMC 17.04.025) says it is all buildings/structures divided by lot area. OMC 17.14.080 defines building lot area as excluding access easements. According to the project table on Sheet A-01, they use 6,720 SF as the lot area, which includes the 1,000 SF of dedicated easement area at the front of the parcel. So, the calculation should use 5,720 SF as the lot area. If you exclude the easement area (per the Code), then the FAR is actually 0.41.
- The front door is not oriented to the street, the Design Guidelines state, "A new primary building should have a main entrance and façade parallel to and facing the street."
- The architectural style does not pay homage to the history of the site as a farm/orchard, and the existing 1935 building. While it is not considered a contributor, there is no connection between the proposed architectural style and the surrounding historic homes in the Nutwood Tract.
- There is no architectural interest in the building, it is a long narrow rectangle with a small porch, and nothing to provide visual relief along the long western elevation that is visible from the street.
- The architecture and layout of the project look more appropriate for a multi-family complex than a single-family residence. Existing duplexes in the surrounding neighborhood all look like individual single-family residences.
- There are no details on the plans what the front porch will look like.

Landscaping

- Concrete is the primary surface throughout the landscaping, with few planting areas. The Design Guidelines state, "Parkways, front yards, and side yards should be reserved for landscape. Paving or non-porous surfaces should be minimized." Especially with the increased FAR, the lack of landscaping is not consistent with the historic neighborhood. Shifting the trash can area, as discussed above, would allow for a decrease in concrete walkways.
- Request drainage plan – there is a significant increase in impermeable surfaces on the property, and as the landscape plan exists, it appears most of the drainage would be along the shared property line. We would like to request a condition that the applicant provide a drainage plan prior to the issuance of any construction permits for the project.
- We have several mature trees, including a liquid amber and avocado tree whose canopy and drip line extend onto the project site, which could be negatively impacted by the proposed construction. We have included pictures of the trees below. Per the Old Towne Design Guidelines, "Mature trees and hedges, including street trees, should be preserved or replaced with compatible plantings as necessary." We would like to make two requests in regards to preserving these trees during construction:

- We would like to request the relocation of the new sewer line that is proposed to run along the eastern property line, since that would impact the root systems of the numerous mature trees on our property that are along the shared P/L. Additionally the current proposed location of the line would block access to our driveway during construction.
- We would like to request a condition for an arborist-prepared construction plan to preserve tree roots and dripline of these existing mature trees during groundwork.
- Proposed gate located on the southeast corner of the house would attach to 3-foot block wall, unsure what the plan is.

Other Comments

- Our water and gas line potentially run through their property and could be located under the proposed footings. We request a condition of approval to confirm location of water and gas lines before demolition/construction begins.
- Per Code Section 17.29.120, we want to confirm that the conditions of approval for the project include that owner-occupancy is required for a single-family dwelling with a JADU, and that the JADU rental is required to be more than 30 days.

Conclusion/Requested Conditions

Thank you for your consideration. Below is a summary of our requested conditions of approval for the project at 405 E Toluca Ave.

- A continuance of approval of the project until the easement issue has been worked out with the Planning and Public Works Departments.
- Relocation of the new sewer line that is proposed to run along the eastern property line away from the drip line and root system of existing mature trees on adjacent property (415).
- An arborist-prepared construction plan to preserve tree roots and dripline of these existing mature trees during groundwork, approved by the City's tree specialist prior to demolition permits.
- Confirm location of water and gas lines before demolition/construction begins.
- The applicant provides a drainage plan prior to the issuance of any construction permits for the project.

Regards,

Ashley and Jonathan Toomey



End of Toluca Avenue

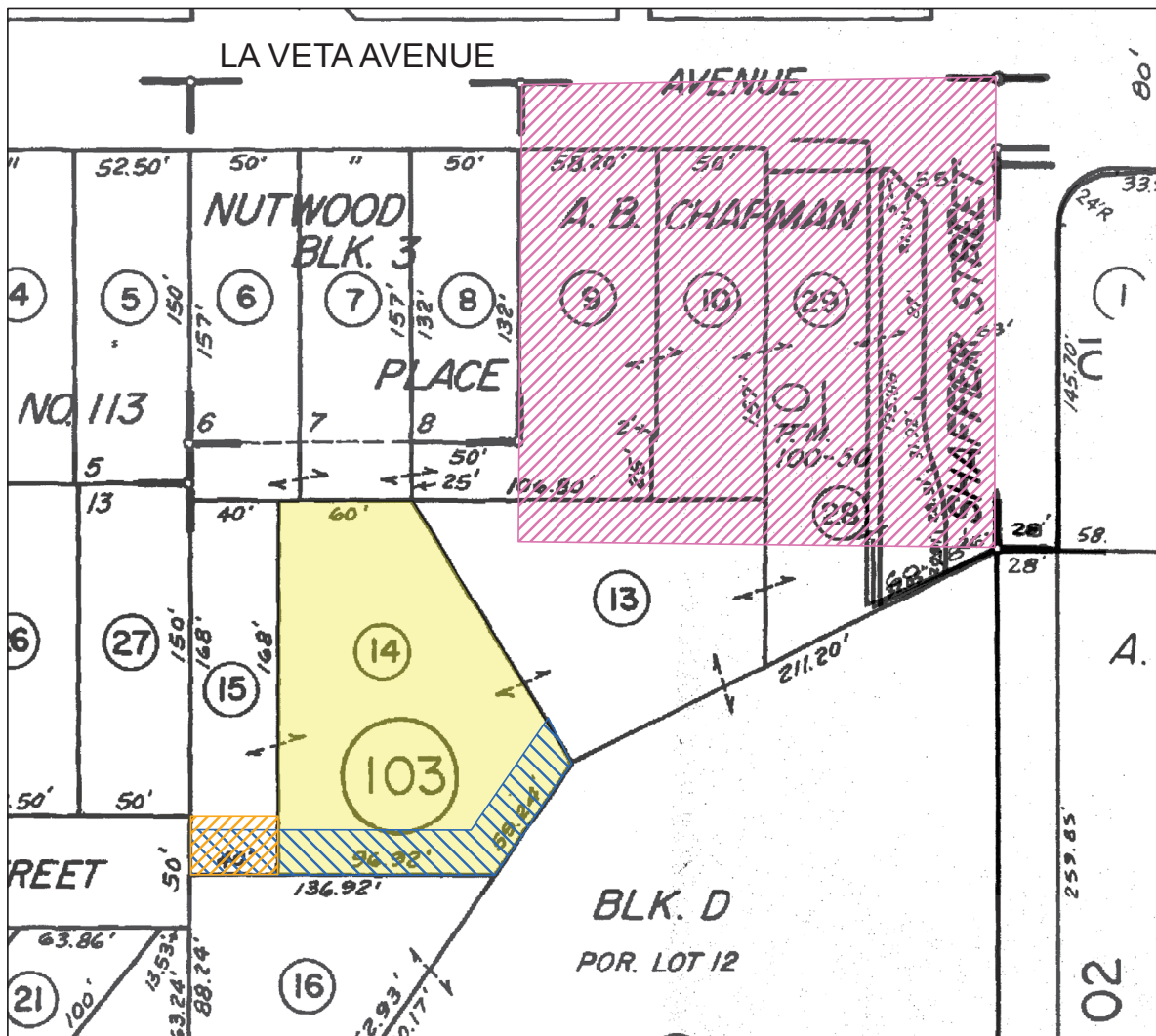


Avocado tree



Liquid Amber tree

Scale 1 inch = 53.88 feet



Legend

- PARCEL 1 - Property in Question_Fee
- PARCEL 2 - Easements
- PARCEL 2 - Access Easement
- Item No. 4 - Easement for Right of Way
In Bk40 Pg333 of Deeds
- The exact location of said easement cannot
be determined and is not plottable
- Item No. 5 - Easement for Road & Ditches
In Bk148 Pg148 & Bk262 Pg2 of Deeds
- Affects said portion as described in the document

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Fidelity National Title Company
19000 MacArthur Blvd., Suite 300,
Irvine, CA 92612

Title Order No. : 000089297, Preliminary Report dated March 5, 2015

Reference :

Property : 415 East Toluca Avenue, Orange, CA

Drawing Date : 04/08/2015 - FNFI

Assessor's Parcel No. : 390-103-14

Data :

Any discrepancies, conflicts in boundary lines, shortage in area, encroachments, or any other facts which a correct survey would disclose and are not shown by the public records. This plat is for your aid in locating your land with reference to streets and other parcels. While this plat is believed to be correct, the Company assumes no liability for any reason of reliance thereon.

Plat Showing : A PORTION OF LAND IS SITUATED IN THE CITY OF ORANGE, COUNTY OF ORANGE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA,

Sheet
1 of 1

Archive #