



Agenda Item

Design Review Committee

Item #: 4.2.

12/17/2025

File #: 25-0695

TO: Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee

THRU: Hayden Beckman, Planning Manager

FROM: Angelo Huang, Assistant Planner

1. SUBJECT

A request to remodel the interior, add 493 square-feet, and relocate an existing single-family home located in the Old Towne Historic District, at 629 E. Washington Avenue. (Design Review No. 5153).

2. SUMMARY

The applicant proposes to move an existing single-story residence approximately 15 feet to the south, remodel, and add 493 square feet to a structure located on a contributing property within in the Old Towne Historic district at 629 E. Washington Avenue.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve Design Review No. 5153.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant: Lorena Lopez | Truplans

Owner: Karol and Rafael Monterrey

Property Location: 629 E. Washington Avenue

General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential 2-6 du/ac (LDR)

Zoning Classification: Single Family Residential 6,000 square feet (R-1-6)

Existing Development: 608-square-foot single family residence with a detached garage

Associated Application: SP-1176

Previous DRC Project Review: None

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project includes:

- Relocation of the existing home southerly towards the front of the property to accommodate the addition to the rear, as well as to maintain a similar setback to the neighboring properties.
- Single-story addition of 493 square feet behind the single-family home. The addition includes one additional master bedroom and one additional bathroom. The addition will also include a new kitchen.

- Interior remodel of 279 square feet to accommodate better circulation throughout the home and the new addition.
- Demolition of unpermitted additions and detached accessory structures.

6. EXISTING SITE

The site is developed a 608-square-foot cottage style vernacular home and 476-square-foot detached garage. The home features a front facing porch façade and simple massing. The exterior materials consists of horizontal wood channel siding, low-pitched cross-gable composition roof, and shallow, open eaves. The home also has a unique 34-foot 4-inch existing front yard setback. The historical report states that multiple major alterations have been made to the property which includes additions to the side and rear of the home as well as the garage in the rear. The home was constructed circa 1909 and is a contributor to the Old Towne Historic District.

7. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The building is located on the 600 block of East Washington Avenue between Shaffer and Harwood Street and outside of the Downtown Plaza Core. The surrounding properties on the block consist of single-family homes. The block consists of several contributing properties, and the average Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of the block is about 0.31 percent.

8. ANALYSIS OF THE PROJECT

Item 1: Relocation of the Existing Home

The project proposes the relocation of the existing home approximately 14 ft. 4 in. towards the south to be more in line with the front setback of the neighboring properties. This relocation also allows the applicant to have their addition in the rear of the home rather than in front of the home which aligns with the Historic Preservation Design Standards to minimize the visibility of additions. The Historic Resource Assessment also supports the relocation of the structure, as the specific location of the building is not a defining feature of the Old Towne Historic District as a resource. The relocation would therefore be more consistent with the district as a resource.

Item 2: Addition to Home

The project includes a 493 square-foot addition to the rear of the home. The addition includes a new master bedroom, bedroom, and kitchen. The overall height of the addition will be subordinate to the existing structure, and the materials will be consistent with the existing. The addition's exterior will be composed of 6-inch wood siding in contrast to the existing 4-inch siding, Milgard wood windows and doors, and a composite roof to match. The addition also proposed small insets to distinguish the point of the original structure and the addition.

Item 3: Removal/Reversal of Unpermitted Work

Staff and the Historic Resource Assessment identified several unpermitted structures and conversion of the garage. This project proposes to remove or revert the new or existing structures to its originally approved state to meet code compliance for the project.

The project meets all City of Orange code requirements for the underlying zoning. Staff recommend that the Design Review Committee (DRC) approve the proposal.

9. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

None.

10. PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice was provided to owners and tenants within 300 feet of the project on or before December 4, 2025, and the site was posted with a notice on or before that date.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines 15303 (Class 3 - New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) because the project consists of a small addition to an existing single-family home. There is no environmental public review required for a Categorical Exemption.

12. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

Based on the following Findings and statements in support of such Findings, staff recommends the DRC make a final determination on the proposed project with recommended conditions (Orange Municipal Code 17.10.070.G).

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.

The proposed project is in conformance with the Historic Preservation Design Standards (HPDS), which are the prescriptive design criteria for projects within the Old Towne Historic District. The proposed rear addition is subordinate to the existing building and is not visible from the street. It is compatible with the mass, scale, and roof form of the historic building and would not affect the appearance of the Historic District. The relocation of the existing structure would not negatively impact the district as the relocation will remain on the property and have a front setback that is more consistent with the neighborhood.

2. In any National Register Historic District, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines.

The project is in conformance with the HPDS. Projects found to be in conformance with the HPDS are generally considered to be in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

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.

The project upholds community aesthetics through an internally consistent and integrated design theme. The proposed project is in conformance with the Historic Preservation Design Standards (HPDS), which are the prescriptive design criteria for projects within the Old Towne Historic District. The proposed rear addition is subordinate to the existing building and is not visible from the street. It is compatible with the mass, scale, and roof form of the historic building and would not affect the appearance of the Historic District. The inset and proposed siding creates clear distinction between the addition and the original home. The 34 percent FAR proposed is consistent with the average FAR of the block. Hence, the addition is an acceptable square-foot increase, given that the addition occurs at the rear of the property.

13. CONDITIONS

The approval of this project is subject to the following conditions:

1. This project is approved as a precise plan. All work shall conform in substance and be maintained in general conformance with the plans (date stamped approved December 17, 2025, and in the project case file), including modifications required by the conditions of approval, and as recommended for approval by the Design Review Committee. After the application has been approved, if changes are proposed regarding the location or alteration of any use or structure, a changed plan may be submitted to the Community Development Director for approval. If the Community Development Director determines that the proposed change complies with the provisions and the spirit and intent of the approval action, and that the action would have been the same for the changed plan as for the approved plan, the Community Development Director may approve the changed plan without requiring a new public meeting. If the Community Development Director determines that any proposed change is substantial, he may refer the plans to the Design Review Committee for subsequent review and determination.
2. The applicant agrees, as a condition of City's approval of Design Review No. 5153, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless, at applicant's expense, the City, its officers, agents, and employees ("City") from and against any claim, action or proceeding brought against the City, including, but not limited to, any claim, action or proceeding commenced within the time period provided in Government Code Section 66499.37 to attack, review, set aside, void or annul the City's approval, to challenge the determination made by the City under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") or to challenge the reasonableness, legality or validity of any condition attached hereto. City shall promptly notify applicant of any such claim, action or proceeding to which the City receives notice and to cooperate fully with the applicant in the defense thereof. Applicant shall reimburse the City for any and all costs and expenses, including, but not limited to, court costs and attorney's fees that the City may be required to pay, including any expenses ordered by a court or expenses incurred through the Office of the City Attorney in connection with said claim, action or proceeding. City may, in its sole discretion, participate in the defense of any claim, action or proceeding but such participation shall not relieve applicant of the obligations of this condition. In the event the applicant is required to defend City in connection with such claim, action or proceeding, City shall have the right to approve counsel to so defend the City, approve all significant decisions concerning the manner in which the defense is conducted and approve any all settlements, which approval(s) shall not be unreasonably withheld. The obligations set forth herein remain in full force and effect throughout all stages of litigation including any and all appeals of any lower court judgment rendered in the proceeding. Further, applicant agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the City for all costs and expenses incurred in enforcing this provision.
3. 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 may be cause for revocation of this permit.
4. The final approved conditions of approval shall be reprinted on the first or second page of the construction documents when submitting to the Building Division for the plan check process.

5. Construction permits shall be obtained for all future construction work, as required by the City of Orange, Building Division. Failure to obtain the required building permits will be cause for revocation of this permit.
6. If not utilized, project approval expires 24 months from the approval date. Extensions of time may be granted in accordance with OMC Section 17.08.060
7. Implement the treatment recommendations for the property found in Attachment 4 - Historic Resource Assessment (Table 3: Exterior Features and Table 4: Interior Features)

14. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2 DPR Form
- Attachment 3 Project Plans
- Attachment 4 Historic Resource Assessment
- Attachment 5 Relocation Plan Assessment