



AGENDA ITEM

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

September 2, 2020

TO: CHAIR SKORPANICH AND MEMBERS OF THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

THRU: Anna Pehoushek, Assistant Community Development Director

FROM: Kelly Ribuffo, Associate Planner

1. SUBJECT

Design Review No. 4933-17 – Northern Gateway Commercial Center

2. SUMMARY

The applicant proposes to construct a new 1,872 square foot commercial building and relocate a 122 square foot historic gas station to the vacant property located at 887 N. Glassell Street.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant/Architect: Leason Pomeroy III

Owner: CPR Developing Partners

Property Location: 887 N. Glassell Street

General Plan Designation: General Commercial (GC)

Zoning Classification: Limited Business (C-1)

Existing Development: Vacant Lot

Lot Size: 9,880 square feet

Associated Application: Minor Site Plan No. 0929-17, Environmental Review No. 1864-17

Previous Design Review Committee (DRC) Project Review: None

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to construct a new 1,872 square foot commercial building and relocate a 122 square foot historic gas station to the vacant property located at 887 N. Glassell Street. Design features of the new commercial building include a flat parapet roof, stucco siding with minimal scoring details, and steel frame glass storefronts. The historic gas station would be oriented at the northwest corner of the property facing the intersection of N. Glassell Street and E. Collins Avenue, similar to its current location at

305 S. Main Street. Along with the gas station building, an associated light standard and pole sign would be relocated to the new site. A new monument sign and wall signs for the commercial building are also proposed as part of the plan. New landscaping is proposed throughout the site featuring London Plane trees.

Proposed plans, including construction details, are included as Attachment 2 of this report.

The proposed work meets the development standards for the C-1 zoning district, including setbacks, Floor Area Ratio (FAR), and building height. Tree count is discussed in the Analysis section of this report.

5. EXISTING SITE

The project property is a vacant lot, with no paving or vegetation. It is currently used intermittently as a temporary construction staging site for Public Works road projects.

Current photographs of the property and vicinity are included in Attachment 4 of this report.

The Public Works Department has required a 10-foot wide property dedication along N. Glassell Street and E. Collins Avenue property lines for future road widening. This reduces the overall property size from approximately 12,000 square feet to 9,880 square feet and has influenced what is being presented as the proposed site plan.

6. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The subject property is located at the southeast corner of N. Glassell Street and E. Collins Avenue. The intersection is located in an area of transition between residential uses to the south and east and commercial and industrial uses to the north towards Katella Avenue and to the west towards Main Street. The site is bordered to the north and west by commercial retail and restaurants (C-1), to the east by single-family residential development (R-1-6), and to the south by multifamily residential development (R-3).

7. ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

Issue 1: Relocation of Historic Gas Station

A significant feature of the proposed project is relocation of a historic gas station building, along with an associated light mast and pole sign, from 305 S. Main Street to the project site. Constructed in 1928, the building is eligible for the California Register of Historic Places under Criteria 1 and 3 for its association with early automotive culture and its unique architectural design. The building has not operated as a gas station since 1990, but has been used for other retail uses such a produce and flower sales. A full cultural resource assessment is included as Attachment 7 of this report.

The building is currently located at the intersection of S. Main Street and E. Palmyra Avenue. Character-defining features of the building include, but are not limited to, the steeply pitched and curved roof form, multi-paned windows and related decorative trim elements, white plaster siding, associated light standard and pole sign, and its placement at the intersection of two streets. The accessory structures at the Main Street property are not contributing features to the historic significance of the gas station, as they as much later additions to the site.

Detailed plans for disassembly and relocation are included in Attachments 2 and 7. The building is proposed to be disassembled into three pieces. The two drive-through “wings”

of the roof would be detached, roofing removed, and reinforced with braces for transport. The main “box” of the building would be cut from its foundation and braced with braces for transport on a flatbed trailer. The building would be reassembled on site on a new foundation. The pieces of the building would then be bolted back together. New steel brace frames would be added to reinforce the building. New composition shingle roofing and plaster siding would be added as part of the final rehabilitation. The associated light standard and pole sign would also be relocated by cutting them at the base and attaching them to new bases at the project site.

It is the opinion of staff that with the mitigation measures proposed in the Cultural Resources Assessment and draft Mitigated Negative Declaration that relocation of the gas station to the new site will not have a substantial adverse impact on the historic integrity of the building. The proposed plan minimizes adverse impacts to the setting by situating the building at the intersection of two streets, similar to its current location. Character-defining features and finishes will be repaired or replaced in-kind after relocation of the building. A qualified historic architect or architectural historian will be present to monitor relocation and reassembly of the building at the project site (see Condition #3).

In addition to rehabilitation of the building, the applicant proposes to install interpretive display panels adjacent to the “wings” of the roofline, to mimic the location where gas station pumps were installed during the period of significance. A preliminary design is included as Attachment 6. Per the recommended conditions of approval, the final design would be approved by the Community Development Director.

Issue 2: Compatibility with Surrounding Development

The proposed project is not located in an area of the City with any specific adopted design standards or guidelines. However, the project must still be evaluated to determine whether it upholds community aesthetics through implementation of an internally consistent and integrated design theme.

The subject site is located at the southeast intersection of N. Glassell Street and E. Collins Avenue. The intersection is located in an area of transition between residential uses to the south and east, and commercial and industrial uses to the north towards Katella Avenue and to the west towards Main Street. Existing commercial development includes small-scale commercial strip centers and some standalone restaurant buildings that back up directly to adjacent residential homes. Though it is located near Old Towne, the area has no consistent design theme. Commercial buildings reflect simple low-rise development, with stucco siding, glass storefronts, and flat roofs with red clay tile accents. Residences represent a mix of architectural styles ranging from the 1920s to present day.

The applicant proposes to construct a simple commercial building with finishes to match those of surrounding commercial properties. The building serves as a backdrop to the relocated historic gas station, which has a more prominent location near the intersection on the site plan. The gas station itself has a unique flared roof shape, with stucco siding and wood frame windows.

Overall staff is in support of the architectural style of the building as proposed. The development is similar in style compared to the other developments around it, and the mass and scale is consistent with previous development in the area. The site is directly

adjacent to single-family and multifamily residential development, but commercial activity on the site is oriented towards the street intersection, away from residential uses. Given the diverse array of architectural styles in the area and the orientation of the building on the property, it is the opinion of staff that the proposed location for the historic gas station is also appropriate for the area.

Issue 3: Tree Count

Orange Municipal Code (OMC) Section 17.18.160.B.1.a states that the number of trees required for projects in commercial zoning districts shall be calculated as follows:

“... add together the total length of all the perimeter property lines (all sides), the total length of the perimeter of the buildings, and the total length of all parking rows on the site, and divide by 36.”

Per this calculation, 21 trees are required for the project site. The applicant proposes installation of four (4) 24” box London Plane trees (*Platanus acerifolia*) as part of the new landscape plan, with three along E. Collins Avenue and one adjacent to the historic gas station building near N. Glassell Street.

Staff supports a reduced tree count on the property. Due to the proximity to the Collins/Glassell Street intersection there is limited area available installation of trees that may cause visibility issues for vehicles turning right onto Collins Avenue. Fire access prevents installation of any landscaping, including trees, along the north property line. Finally, maintaining visibility of the historic gas stations from the intersection is important to providing an appropriate setting for the relocated building.

Due to the proximity to the intersection and future plans to widen the street for a dedicated right turn lane, there are currently no plans for the Public Works Department to install any street trees in the public right-of-way.

8. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Staff reviewed the application on February 14, 2018, July 18, 2018, January 16, 2019, August 7, 2019, April 29, 2020, and July 1, 2020 and recommended approval of the project to the Design Review Committee and Planning Commission on July 1, 2020.

9. PUBLIC NOTICE

On August 28, 2020, 77 notices were mailed to adjacent property owners and tenants for Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 1864-17. The Design Review Committee Meeting was noticed as part of the publication and mailing.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 1864-17 was prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act.

11. 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.

Findings for DRC applications come from four sources:

- The Orange Municipal Code (OMC)
- The Infill Residential Design Guidelines
- The Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne (commonly referred to the Old Towne Design Standards or OTDS)
- Orange Eichler Design Standards (OEDS)

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 approval the project with following conditions to the Planning Commission.

- 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).

The project upholds community aesthetics through implementation of a compatible design theme with surrounding development and compliance with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*. The development is similar in style compared to the other developments around it, and the mass, scale, materials and layout is consistent with existing development in the area. The new commercial building is a simple low-rise retail building, with a flat roof, stucco siding, and metal and glass storefront. The orientation of the relocated historic gas station and associated light standard and pole sign have been chosen mimic its placement on its current site and to retain historic integrity of setting, feeling, and association of the building as a gas station and a street intersection. Addition of interpretive signage addresses the historic use of the building as an early 20th century gas station.

12. 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 included as Attachment 2 (date stamped August 10, 2020) of this report, including modifications required by the conditions of approval, and as recommended for approval by the Design Review Committee. Any changes from the approved plans shall be subject to subsequent review and approval by the Design Review Committee.
2. After any 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.

3. Final approval of Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 1864-17 shall include the following mitigation measures as recommended in the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared by LSA dated February 2020:

Mitigation Measure CUL-1:

- Prior to the issuance of building permits, the Community Development Director, or designee, shall confirm that the following notes are included on the construction drawings to ensure compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards:
 - The removal of historic materials or alteration of features that characterize the historic-period building shall be avoided. Repair/replacement of materials shall be made in-kind.
 - Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the historic-period building shall be preserved and/or repaired/replaced in-kind.
 - Any deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a character-defining feature, the new feature shall match the old feature in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
 - Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used.
 - Any change to the treatment of the historic materials of the building that is not described in the project plans shall be reviewed and approved by the Community Development Director prior to start of construction.
- Prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy, the applicant shall install a historical display in a visually prominent location, such as the exterior of the building. The display must include a map that clearly shows the building's original location. It shall detail the history of the building, including photographs of the building at its original location and photographs or video of the dismantling and relocation process. The design and proposed location of the display shall be submitted to the Community Development Director, or designee, and/or reviewing body for review and approval prior to installation. It is suggested that the applicant consider designing the display in a manner that incorporates or references a historic-period gas pump or other gas station feature.
- Prior to issuance of a permit to relocate the historic building or related pole signs, documentation of the existing site condition shall be completed in a manner similar to the Historic American Building Survey standards. Documentation shall include digital photographs (site overviews and detail shots of the building and signs in their current and proposed locations), a written historic narrative similar to this report, and a scaled site plan. Copies of this information shall be provided to the City of Orange Community Development Department, the Historical Center at the main branch of the Orange Public Library, and the Orange County Archives.
- A historic architect and/or qualified architectural historian shall review the final relocation/reconstruction plans to ensure retention of the character-defining features and integrity of the building and pole signs. A memorandum documenting the review and findings shall be submitted to the Community Development Department prior to issuance of a building permit.
- A historic architect or qualified architectural historian is required to monitor the relocation and reassembly of the former gas station building and pole signs. A memorandum

documenting the review and findings shall be submitted to the Community Development Department prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy. This memorandum will include monitoring dates, noting compliance with relocation approach, and photographs.

- In the event the removal of the historic building requires any excavation, prior to the issuance of a grading and/or building permit, the applicant shall retain a qualified archaeological monitor, meeting the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications for Archaeology as defined at 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 61, Appendix A (Professional Archeologist) subject to review and approval by the Community Development Director, or designee. This monitor shall be present at the pre-grade conference in order to explain to cultural mitigation measures associated with the proposed Project. The monitor shall be present during all ground-disturbing activities on the site. The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures shall be submitted immediately to the Community Development Department.
4. 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 permit, save and except that caused by the City's active negligence.
 5. 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.
 6. Construction permits shall be obtained for all future 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 permit.
 7. The project approval includes certain fees and/or other exactions. Pursuant to Government Code Section 66020, these conditions constitute written notice of the fees and/or exactions. The applicant is hereby notified that the ninety (90) day protest period commencing from the date of approval of the project has begun. If the applicant fails to file a protest regarding these conditions or requirements, the applicant is legally barred from later challenging such exactions per Government Code Section 66020.
 8. 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.

13. ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map
2. Architectural, Civil, and Landscape Plans date stamped 8/10/2020
3. Color and Material Board and Model (on display at Civic Center)
4. Site Photographs
5. DPR Form for 305 S. Main Street
6. Preliminary Interpretive Signage
7. Cultural Resources Assessment dated February 2020 (PDF)
8. Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 1864-17 dated August 2020 (Available on City website or by request by calling 714-744-7220)

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3.2 DESIGN REVIEW NO. 4933-17 – NORTHERN GATEWAY COMMERCIAL CENTER

- A proposal to construct a new 1,872 square foot commercial building and relocate a 122 square foot historic gas station to a vacant property.
- 887 N. Glassell Street
- Staff Contact: Kelly Ribuffo, (714) 744-7223, kribuffo@cityoforange.org
- DRC Action: Recommendation to the Planning Commission

Kelly Ribuffo, Associate Planner, provided an overview of the project consistent with the staff report.

Leason Pomeroy, project architect and co-owner of the property, spoke on behalf of the project. He advised the Committee that members from consultant LSA were not available to answer any questions this evening.

Committee members had questions and comments on the following:

- Clarification on the zoning, parking requirements and setbacks.
- Placement of trees on the property line, as well as adjoining property.
- Loss of eligibility for the National and State Registers of Historic Places if the historic building is moved.
- The Historic Resource Assessment report states that the building has undergone significant changes from its original design based on the removal of the rear enclosure shown in the 1970s photo. However, no evidence such as Sanborn maps was provided that the rear portion of the gas station was an original part of it.
- The integrity of the resource is solid enough that it still conveys time, place and original use; the plaster, although apparently not original, still reads very clearly that it was a late 1920s roadside gas station.
- Three previous reports concluded that the historic building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This report's assertion that it is not eligible lacks any credible documentation to support it. Furthermore, the stucco is identified as a character-defining feature in the report yet that element is used to discount it for eligibility from the National Register.
- The Historic Resource Assessment report is not persuasive that the proposed project meets the preservation criteria that is being provided in the report; the orientation is being changed, the building does not address the streets in the same manner as it did, and the setting is being changed as it now has a large building behind it.
- LSA's assessment glosses over the historic use of the property and its site.
- On the new site, the gas pump pavement under the roof overhangs will be lost replaced with landscaping, diminishing the building's ability to convey its historic use.
- Is it possible that the plaster proposed for removal may have historic significance of its own even though it is not original?
- As proposed, the building would not be able to convey its functional use as a gas station once it is moved due to the loss of its ingress and egress; consider removal of one parking space to accommodate a usable outdoor area for a future tenant.
- The wheel stops are redundant and dangerous.

- Pros and cons of rotating the building on the new site to retain the original orientation to the street and corner.
- The historic display sign is likely too high, making it difficult to read.
- Changes to the roof structure once the fascia is rebuilt.
- The report makes a statement about original doors but no photos are provided.
- In the 1970s photo, the doorway of the rear enclosure is inconsistent with other doorways and architectural details on the remainder of the building. This suggests that the rear enclosure is likely not original construction, contrary to the assertions in the Historic Resources Assessment.

Al Ricci, property co-owner, asked if they could bifurcate the project and return with the building relocation at a later date in order to proceed with the remainder of the project.

Marissa Moshier, Historic Preservation Planner, stated no, this item has been agendaized as a comprehensive project and the environmental documents deal with the relocation of the building.

- The Committee needs justification from LSA regarding the National Register eligibility of the building and LSA team members need to be present to respond to all their questions. The applicant team and/or City staff might consult with the State Office of Historic Preservation for confirmation.
- Too much landscaping takes away from the historic setting; staff should consider relaxing the landscape requirements to preserve the historic building setting.
- Consider bollards to protect the historic structure instead of constructing concrete column bases for the roof posts.
- Stucco or restoration of the wood siding is acceptable and will not change the eligibility of the building.
- Simplicity of the new building is well done.
- Is there evidence that the historic building was originally all wood and later covered with plaster?
- Consider a dutch door in lieu of a new window for walk-up customer service.
- Consider removing the curbs around the historic building to improve access and create a building setting more like its original.

Mr. Pomeroy asked the Committee for a continuance.

A motion was made to continue Design Review No. 4933-17 – Northern Gateway Commercial Center in order for the applicant to provide responses to the Committee's questions and concerns.

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| MOTION: | Fox |
| SECOND: | McCormack |
| AYES: | McCormack, Skorpanich, McDermott, Imboden, and Fox |
| NOES: | None |
| ABSTAIN: | None |

MOTION CARRIED

4. ADJOURNMENT: 9:37 p.m.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 16, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. via various teleconference locations.