



City of Orange

Legislation Text

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TO: Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee

THRU: Anna Pehoushek, Assistant Community Development Director

FROM: Marissa Moshier, Historic Preservation Planner

1. SUBJECT

Design Review No. 5000-20, Brock Residence, 274 S. Center Street

2. SUMMARY

Final determination from the Design Review Committee.

The applicant proposes exterior modifications to a historic single-family residence, including demolishing a portion of the one-story rear section of the house and replacing it with a 359 square foot first floor addition, demolishing a second floor deck and replacing it with a 107 square foot second floor attic and stair access, constructing a 320 square foot basement, and removing one of two front doors and replacing it with a window.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant/Owner: Erich and Eraina Brock

Property Location: 274 S. Center Street, Old Towne Historic District

General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential (LDR)

Zoning Classification: Single-Family Residential (R-1-6)

Existing Development: 1,509 square foot historic single-family residence and 272 square foot garage

Associated Application: None

Previous DRC Project Review: None

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project includes the following components:

- Demolition of 229 square feet at the rear of the building and replacement with a 359 square foot one-story addition. The addition has a low-sloped roof with wood siding and wood windows.
- Demolition of the second floor deck and construction of a 107 square foot attic and stair access at the second floor. The addition is placed below the eaves of the historic roof with a gable roof that follows the slope of the second floor roof. The addition has wood siding and

wood windows.

- Construction of a 320 square foot basement under the new addition.
- Removal of one of the two front doors and replacement with a wood window.

5. EXISTING SITE

The site is developed with a 1,509 square foot single-family residence and 272 square foot detached garage. The house is two stories with two one-story additions at the rear. Based on information provided by the previous property owner, the applicant believes the house was divided into two units in the mid-20th century. It is currently a single-family residence and is a contributor to the Old Towne Historic District.

6. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The property is located on the west side of S. Center Street in a residential area of the Old Towne Historic District. Surrounding properties include a mix of single-family residences and duplexes and are zoned Single-Family Residential (R-1-6). The majority of the surrounding properties are contributors to the historic district.

7. ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

Staff has reviewed and provided comments on multiple revisions to the plans since the application was submitted in January 2020. Inaccuracies in the plans may remain, but after the prolonged staff review, the plans have been deemed acceptable for the DRC's review.

Issue 1: Second Floor Stair Access and Attic

Although second floor additions in the Old Towne Historic District are unusual, in this case, the proposed addition is appropriately scaled to the historic building and will not be visible from the street. The addition uses compatible materials and will allow the existing historic roof, eaves, and brackets to remain. Removal of the second floor deck also improves privacy for neighboring properties. With these considerations, the second floor addition is consistent with the Historic Preservation Design Standards.

Issue 2: Demolition and First Floor Addition

The house has a series of one-story additions at the rear. The oldest section has a shed roof, wood siding, and brackets matching the two-story portion of the house. It was likely a service porch extension that was filled in to create habitable space over time. The next section, proposed for demolition, has a nearly flat roof, wood siding, and wood windows that appear to have been salvaged from a different building. Although aerial photographs are not very clear, this section of the building does not appear to be present in a 1938 photograph of the property (Attachment 3). It may be present in a 1947 aerial photograph. In addition, based on information provided by the previous property owner, the applicant believes this section of the house was added in the mid-20th century, when the house was divided into two units. This section is in poor condition and does not contribute to the architecture of the house or to an understanding of the period of significance of the historic district.

With this information, staff believes it is reasonable to move forward with demolition and replacement of this section of the building to allow remodeling. The applicant is proposing an addition with a similar low-sloped roof, wood siding, and wood windows. The size, placement, and materials of the addition are compatible with the historic house.

Issue 3: Removal of Second Front Door

The applicant removed trim around the existing second front door and uncovered original framing, which indicates that the door likely replaced a window matching the flanking windows that remain on the front elevation. See Attachment 6 for photographs of the original framing exposed. The second door may have been added when the house was converted into two units.

The applicant proposes to replace the door with a wood window similar to the flanking smaller windows, consistent with physical evidence from the building. The existing door to the north will remain.

8. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Not applicable to a Design Review application.

9. PUBLIC NOTICE

On June 24, 2021, the City sent a notice of the Design Review Committee meeting to consider the project to a total of 84 property owners and tenants within a 300-foot radius of the project site and persons specifically requesting notice, as required by Orange Municipal Code 17.08.040 for additions to second stories within a historic district. The project site was posted with the notice on that same date.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Categorical Exemption: The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guideline 15531 (Class 31 - Historical Resource Rehabilitation/Restoration). The project consists of demolition of non-contributing sections of the building, construction of compatible additions, and minor exterior modifications that are consistent with evidence from the building. The proposed project is compatible with the character of the Old Towne Historic District and will not negatively impact the historic building in conformance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (SOI Standards)* and the Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne. There is no public review required for a Categorical Exemption.

11. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

Based on the following Findings and statements in support of such Findings, staff recommends the DRC approve the project with recommended conditions.

- 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.G.1).

The proposed project is in conformance with the Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne, which are the prescriptive design criteria for projects within the Old Towne Historic District. The additions are compatible with the historic building, located at the rear of the building, and will not significantly alter or obscure character-defining features. The mass and scale of the additions are appropriate for the size of the historic building and for the character of the Historic District. The modifications to the front elevation are consistent with physical evidence from the building and maintain the existing windows on the building.

- In any National Register Historic District, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines (SOI Guidelines) (OMC 17.10.07.G.2).

Projects found to be in conformance with the Old Towne Design Standards are generally considered to be in conformance with the SOI Standards. In conformance with Standard 2, the existing historic materials will be preserved to the greatest extent feasible and the historic character of the property will be retained. In conformance with Standards 9 and 10, the additions are appropriately differentiated from the historic building and will not destroy historic materials or features that characterize the property. The additions could be removed in the future without impairing the form or integrity of the house. The project also will not substantially alter or impair the character of the Historic District as a whole. It is in conformance with the SOI Standards.

- 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.G.3).

Projects located within the Old Towne Historic District must comply with the Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne and SOI Standards (as applicable). As described above, the proposed work conforms with these design standards.

12. CONDITIONS

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

1. All construction shall conform in substance and be maintained in general conformance with plans labeled as Attachment 7 Project Plans in the staff report, including modifications required by the conditions of approval, and as approved 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. 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.
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. 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 may be cause for revocation of this permit.
6. If not utilized, project approval expires twenty-four months from the approval date. Extensions of time may be granted in accordance with OMC Section 17.08.060. The Planning entitlements expire unless Building Permits are pulled within 2 years of the original approval.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2 Site Photographs
- Attachment 3 Aerial Photographs

- Attachment 4 Historic Resource Survey Form
- Attachment 5 Letter of Justification
- Attachment 6 Description of Modifications to Front Window
- Attachment 7 Project Plans