

Capitola Planning Commission

Agenda Report

Meeting: October 2, 2025

From: Community and Economic Development Department

Address: 321 Cherry Avenue



Project Description: Application #25-0349. APN: 035-181-18. Historical Alteration Permit for modifications and a 117 square foot addition to a historic single-family residence located within the Mixed Use Village (MU-V) zoning district. This project is located within the Coastal Zone but does not require a Coastal Development Permit.

Recommended Action: Consider Historic Alteration Application #25-0349 and approve the project with the attached Conditions and Findings for Approval.

Property Owner: Amanda Onstatt

Representative: Jeff Finsand

Background: The Historical Alteration Permit application was submitted to the City Community and Economic Development Department for consideration on July 8, 2025. In accordance with Section 17.120.030.B (Single-Family Exemptions) of the Capitola Municipal Code, a Design Review Permit was not required because the proposed addition was for a ground-floor single-story addition up to four hundred square feet at the rear of the home.

The single-family home at 321 Cherry Avenue involves alterations to an existing historic structure and therefore requires a Historic Alteration Permit by the Planning Commission.

Development Standards: The following table outlines the zoning code requirements for development in the MU-V Zoning District. The proposed addition to the single-family residence complies with all development standards of the MU-V zone. Detailed project plans have been provided (Attachment 1).

Development Standards			
Building Height			
MU-V Regulation		Existing	Proposed
27 feet		25 feet 5 inches	25 feet 5 inches
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)			
MU-V Regulation		Existing	Proposed
2.0		0.49	0.55
Floor Area			
First Story Floor Area		711.5 square feet	845.2 square feet
Second Story Floor Area		466.5 square feet	466.5 square feet
Total Floor Area		1,178 square feet	1,311.7 square feet
Setbacks			
	MU-V Regulation	Existing	Proposed
Front Yard 1 st Story	Min: 0 feet Max: 15 feet	1 foot 10 inches	1 foot 10 inches
Front Yard 2 nd Story	Min: 0 feet Max: 15 feet	1 foot 10 inches	1 foot 10 inches
Side Yard 1 st Story	None	West: 1 foot 3 inches	West: 1 foot 3 inches East: 3 feet 10 inches

			East: 3 feet 10 inches	
Side Yard 2 nd Story	None		West: 1 foot 6 inches East: 4 feet 4 inches	West: 1 foot 6 inches East: 4 feet 4 inches
Rear Yard 1 st Story	20% lot depth	Lot depth 72 feet Min: 14 feet 5 in.	27 feet	23 feet
Rear Yard 2 nd Story			39 feet	39 feet
Residential (up to 1,500 square feet)	Required		Existing	Proposed
	2 spaces total		0 spaces total	0 spaces total Existing nonconforming
Underground Utilities: required with 25% increase in area				Not required

Discussion: The structure located at 321 Cherry Avenue is a modified two-story house (circa-1895) constructed in the vernacular style. The applicant is proposing the following alterations to the rear of the structure:

- Remove non-historic shed on the west elevation.
- Add 117 square feet of habitable space on rear and west elevations. The addition will have a shed roof, and exterior material will include board-and-batten to match historic structure.
- Remove window on the east elevation and infilled with board-and-batten siding to match existing. A new window will be added in the new addition; and,
- Introduce two new window openings and a door on the rear elevation and repair the existing porch deck.

Other repairs and upgrades are proposed that do not affect the appearance of the structure, including a new HVAC system, electrical upgrades, new flooring and sheet rock and insulation.

Historic Alteration Permit: The project involves alterations to an existing historic structure¹ and therefore requires approval of a Historic Alteration Permit by the Planning Commission. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires analysis of impacts to historical resources and defines historical resources as those listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), those designated locally, and those the City elects to treat as a historical resource. Any modification to a historic resource must comply with the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (Standards) to qualify for a CEQA exemption.

The City Planning team reviewed the project for compatibility with the Standards (Attachment 2). After reviewing the proposed plans and analyzing the project, the City has determined that the proposed residential rehabilitation project has been designed to comply with the Standards. Therefore, the project qualifies for a CEQA exemption.

CEQA: Section 15331 of the CEQA Guidelines exempts projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation, or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. The project involves rehabilitation of a historic single-family residence with a small addition of 117 square feet of habitable floor area. The project has been found to be consistent with CEQA Guideline Section 15300.2(f) regarding modifications to historical resources. Therefore, the project qualifies for this CEQA exemption.

Historic Alteration Permit Findings:

- A. The historic character of a property is retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize the property is avoided.**
The project will replace existing materials while preserving the historic significance of the home. The project will maintain the character, scale, and be compatible with the existing neighborhood.
- B. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of fine craftsmanship that characterize a property are preserved.**
The proposed alterations and addition to the rear of the single-family residence will not alter the distinctive materials of the structure and the design will be preserved.
- C. Any new additions complement the historic character of the existing structure. New building components and materials for the addition are similar in scale and size to those of the existing structure.**
The expansion of the shed roof is on a non-primary elevation and fenestration changes are not readily visible to the public. The applicant is proposing to match the original board-and-batten.
- D. Deteriorated historic features are repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature matches the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.**
The proposed alterations will replace and match the existing structure in design, color, and texture. Deteriorated features, such as decayed wood windows will be replaced, and new board-and-batten siding will match existing.
- E. Archeological resources are protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures are undertaken.**
The project affects previously disturbed areas and will not impact archeological resources.
- F. The proposed project is consistent with the general plan, any applicable specific plan, the zoning code, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is subject to Section 753.5 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.**
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Conditions of Approval:

- 1. The project approval includes a Historic Alteration Permit for the renovation and rehabilitation of a historic single-story, single-family residence. The project involves the addition of 117 square feet of floor area. The proposed project is approved as indicated on the final plans reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission on October 6, 2025, except as modified through conditions imposed by the Planning Commission during the hearing.
- 2. Prior to construction, a building permit shall be secured for any new construction or modifications to structures authorized by this permit. Final building plans shall be consistent with the plans approved by the Planning Commission. All construction and site improvements shall be completed according to the approved plans.

3. At time of submittal for building permit review, the Conditions of Approval must be printed in full on the cover sheet of the construction plans.
4. At time of submittal for building permit review, Public Works Standard Detail SMP STRM shall be printed in full and incorporated as a sheet into the construction plans. All construction shall be done in accordance with the Public Works Standard Detail BMP STRM.
5. Prior to making any changes to approved plans, modifications must be specifically requested and submitted in writing to the Community Development Department. Any significant changes to the size or exterior appearance of the structure shall require Planning Commission approval.
6. Prior to issuance of building permit, a landscape plan shall be submitted and approved by the Community Development Department. The landscape plan can be produced by the property owner, landscape professional, or landscape architect. Landscape plans shall reflect the Planning Commission approval and shall identify type, size, and location of species and details of any proposed (but not required) irrigation systems.
7. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall complete landscape work to reflect the approval of the Planning Commission. Specifically, required landscape areas, all required tree plantings, privacy mitigations, erosion controls, irrigation systems, and any other required measures shall be addressed to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.
8. Prior to issuance of building permit, all Planning fees associated with permit #25-0349 shall be paid in full.
9. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant must provide documentation of plan approval by the following entities: Santa Cruz County Sanitation Department, Soquel Water District, and Central Fire Protection District.
10. Prior to issuance of building permits, a drainage plan, grading, sediment and erosion control plan, shall be submitted to the City and approved by Public Works. The plans shall be in compliance with the requirements specified in Capitola Municipal Code Chapter 13.16 Storm Water Pollution Prevention and Protection.
11. Prior to issuance of building permits, the applicant shall submit a stormwater management plan to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works which implements all applicable Post Construction Requirements (PCRs) and Public Works Standard Details, including all standards relating to low impact development (LID).
12. Prior to any land disturbance, a pre-site inspection must be conducted by the grading official to verify compliance with the approved erosion and sediment control plan.
13. Prior to any work in the City road right of way, an encroachment permit shall be acquired by the contractor performing the work. No material or equipment storage may be placed in the road right-of-way.
14. Prior to a project final, all cracked or broken driveway approaches, curb, gutter, or sidewalk shall be replaced per the Public Works Standard Details and to the satisfaction of the Public Works Department. All replaced driveway approaches, curb, gutter or sidewalk shall meet current Accessibility Standards.
15. During construction, any construction activity shall be subject to a construction noise curfew, except when otherwise specified in the building permit issued by the City. Construction noise shall

be prohibited between the hours of nine p.m. and seven-thirty a.m. on weekdays. Construction noise shall be prohibited on weekends with the exception of Saturday work between nine a.m. and four p.m. or emergency work approved by the building official. §9.12.010B

16. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, compliance with all conditions of approval shall be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director. Upon evidence of non-compliance with conditions of approval or applicable municipal code provisions, the applicant shall remedy the non-compliance to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director or shall file an application for a permit amendment for Planning Commission consideration. Failure to remedy a non-compliance in a timely manner may result in permit revocation.
17. This permit shall expire 24 months from the date of issuance. The applicant shall have an approved building permit and construction underway before this date to prevent permit expiration. Applications for extension may be submitted by the applicant prior to expiration pursuant to Municipal Code section 17.156.080.
18. The planning and infrastructure review and approval are transferable with the title to the underlying property so that an approved project may be conveyed or assigned by the applicant to others without losing the approval. The permit cannot be transferred off the site on which the approval was granted.
19. Upon receipt of certificate of occupancy, garbage and recycling containers shall be placed out of public view on non-collection days.
20. Outdoor lighting shall comply with all relevant standards pursuant to Municipal Code Section 17.96.110, including that all outdoor lighting shall be shielded and directed downward such that the lighting is not directly visible from the public right-of-way or adjoining properties.
 - a. Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, or reconstruction shall be followed.
 - b. Prior to the remodeling of the historic residence, the applicant shall catalog all existing details of the structure.
 - c. The applicant and/or contractor shall field verify all existing conditions on historic buildings and match replacement elements and materials according to the approved plans. Any discrepancies found between approved plans, replacement features and existing elements must be reported to the Community Development Department for further direction, prior to construction.

Attachments:

1. 321 Cherry Avenue Project Plans
2. 321 Cherry Avenue Historical Evaluation

Report Prepared By: Gina Paolini, Principal Planner

Reviewed By: Rosie Wyatt, Deputy City Clerk

Approved By: Katie Herlihy, Community Development Director