

P A S T
CONSULTANTS LLC

Seth A. Bergstein
415.515.6224
seth@pastconsultants.com

December 28, 2020

Matt Orbach, Associate Planner
City of Capitola Planning Department
420 Capitola Ave.
Capitola, CA 95010

Re: 216 Central Ave., Capitola, CA – Final Design Review Letter
APN. 036-122-22

Dear Mr. Orbach:

This letter evaluates the proposed alterations to the property located at 216 Central Avenue, in Capitola, California. The subject property contains a relocated and altered single-story house (circa-1891) constructed in the Vernacular Cottage style and a circa-1920s garage.

Project Methodology

On September 17, 2020 PAST Consultants, LLC (PAST) visited the subject property with you to view the existing conditions of the buildings and discuss the proposed building alterations. Design drawings by R. Scott Mitchell of Gigante AG and dated 6/4/2020 were discussed as the first iteration of the proposed building alterations. The initial design called for a two-story rear addition with a shed roof located at the ridgeline of the original house.

On September 29, 2020, PAST submitted a preliminary review letter of the proposed drawings for conformance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (the *Standards*). This letter concluded that the proposed two-story addition was not in scale with the original, modest Vernacular-styled cottage, the shed-roofed upper story was not set back far enough from the original house and the proposed design did not differentiate from the original building mass.

PAST discussed these recommendations with you, the architect and the Client in our remote meeting held on October 14, 2020. The design team agreed to modify the design to address some of the preliminary concerns and to design a project that would meet the *Standards*. Project drawings of the modified design were submitted to the City of Capitola on December 15, 2020. The following letter report evaluates the proposed design as presented on the architectural drawings by R. Scott Mitchell of Gigante AG, dated 12/15/2020.

Existing Site Conditions

The site contains a modified house (circa-1891) constructed in the Vernacular Cottage style and a circa-1920s garage. Both buildings were moved from 112 Central Avenue to the subject property's present location in 2000 (**Figures 1 and 2**).



Figures 1 and 2. Left image shows the front (west) elevation, as viewed from the street. Right image shows the left side (north) elevation.

Following the property's relocation to the subject address at 216 Central Avenue, a rear, gable roofed addition was constructed, removing the post-1915 rear addition (**Figure 3**). The garage was relocated and placed behind the house (**Figure 4**).



Figures 3 and 4. Left image shows the rear (east) elevation, with arrows indicating the circa-2000 addition installed behind the cross-gable roof. Right image shows the relocated garage.

Previous reports by others indicate that the subject property was constructed circa-1891 with a T-shape plan with gable roofs, a shed-roofed porch on the left side elevation, an open rear porch, Novelty wood siding and one-over-one, double-hung sash windows. After 1915, the front elevation

received a small shed-roofed addition with an exterior masonry chimney and a rear shed-roofed addition that removed the original rear porch.¹

Construction Chronology

Based on permits obtained from the City of Capitola Planning Department and the previous historical reports, the following is the building chronology:

- Circa-1891. Construct original house at 112 Central Avenue, with T-shaped plan and open porch.
- Circa-1915. Construct front, shed-roofed addition and chimney to right side elevation. Remove original rear open porch and construct rear addition.
- 2000. Relocate house and garage to present address. Remove circa-1915 rear addition and construct 120-sf, gable-roofed rear addition and deck. Replace wood sash with vinyl-clad sash in original and new openings. Apply wood siding to brick chimney.

Remaining Character Defining Features

The remaining character-defining features are:

- Moderately pitched gable roofs with boxed eaves and wide wood fascia boards.
- Original T-shaped plan with street-facing gable end placed in front of a cross-gable mass.
- Shed-roofed entry porch on left side of front elevation (rails and supports replaced).
- Novelty (Channel) horizontal Redwood siding with corner boards.
- Original wood window surrounds (all original window sash replaced).

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Standards)* provides the framework for evaluating the impacts of additions and alterations to historic buildings. The *Standards* describe four treatment approaches: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction. The *Standards* require that the treatment approach be determined first, as a different set of standards apply to each approach. For the proposed project, the treatment approach is rehabilitation. The *Standards* describe rehabilitation as:

In Rehabilitation, historic building materials and character-defining features are protected and maintained as they are in the treatment Preservation; however, an assumption is made prior to work that existing historic fabric has become damaged or deteriorated over time and, as a result, more repair and replacement will be required. Thus, latitude is given in the

¹ Charlene Duval and Franklin Maggi for Dill Design, *Historic Report for an Existing Residential Building Located at 112 Central Avenue, Capitola, California*, 1999; and Archives and Architecture, *Historical Status Review – 216 Central Avenue, Capitola, California*, 7/27/2020.

Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitation to replace extensively deteriorated, damaged, or missing features using either traditional or substitute materials. Of the four treatments, only Rehabilitation includes an opportunity to make possible an efficient contemporary use through alterations and additions.²

The ten *Standards* for rehabilitation are:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

² *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*: Kay D. Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1995, 62.

Summary of Proposed Alterations

Design Drawings by Gigante, AG and dated December 15, 2020, were the design drawings reviewed for this historic evaluation. Proposed alterations affecting the building exterior include:

- Based on recommendations from October 14, 2020 design review meeting, set back wall of second-story addition behind the cross-gable ridgeline of the original house.
- Prioritize the appearance of the original T-shaped, cross-gable plan by allowing the cross gables to read on the side elevations.
- Differentiate between the original house and the proposed two-story addition.

Evaluation of Proposed Alterations

For the proposed alterations to the subject building, the following lists the ten *Standards* for rehabilitation, with an evaluation given below each standard.

1. *A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.*

The proposed alterations will allow the building to continue its residential building use, while retaining the existing character defining features that remain on the building, in keeping with this *Standard*.

2. *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

The proposed building alterations do not remove any distinctive materials that characterize the property. The proposed rear addition removes the circa-2000 rear addition and does not impact the exterior of the original T-shaped plan, with the exception of the rear-building wall, which was altered previously in 2000.

3. *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

The proposed rehabilitation design does not add conjectural features or elements from other historic properties that would confuse the remaining character-defining features of the existing building, in keeping with this *Standard*.

4. *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*

The circa-1915 additions to the front elevation will be retained, in support of this *Standard*.

5. *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

The proposed alterations maintain distinctive materials, features and finishes that characterize the property, including the wood window surrounds and wood siding, in keeping with this *Standard*.

6. *Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

The proposed alterations will repair the remaining character defining features listed above. Severely deteriorated features, such as decayed wood window surrounds and wood wall cladding will be repaired, rather than replaced, using established rehabilitation techniques for a given substrate.

7. *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*

Physical treatments to repair deteriorated woodwork, including the removal of paint, will be undertaken using methods that will not further damage the historic wood, in keeping with this *Standard*.

8. *Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

This *Standard* does not apply, as archaeological features are not identified at the site.

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

The proposed additions are on the rear and non-primary elevation of the building as recommended by this *Standard*. Following our preliminary review and design meeting with the Client's design team, the current rehabilitation design has placed the proposed two-story rear addition further back from the street, allowing the ridgeline of the cross gable to be apparent. A flattened hipped roof has been chosen on the two-story rear addition to reduce the bulk of the upper story as seen from the street. The addition will be differentiated from the original house by using wood siding boards of a different width than the original house. For these reasons, the proposed rehabilitation design meets this *Standard*.

10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

If desired, the proposed additions could be removed and the building reversed to its original configuration, as the remaining elevations are not being impacted by the proposed rehabilitation design. Since the remaining character defining features of the subject house will be maintained, the property will maintain adequate historic integrity and satisfy this *Standard*.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed design alterations to 216 Central Avenue, Capitola, meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. The proposed changes do not impact the remaining character-defining features or overall historic integrity of the building. Because the proposed alterations to the building meet the *Standards*, the alterations are considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historic resource and do not constitute a substantial adverse change to the historic resource, thus conforming to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Please contact me with any questions regarding this preliminary review letter.

Sincerely,



Seth A. Bergstein
Principal