

Capitola Planning Commission

Agenda Report



Meeting: October 5, 2023
From: Community Development Department
Topic: 511 Escalona Drive

Permit Number: #23-0404

APN: 036-125-02

Design Permit Amendment to modify the previously approved exterior appearance of a two-story, single-family dwelling and attached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), located within the R-1 (Single-Family Residential) zoning district.

The project is in the Coastal Zone but does not require a Coastal Development Permit.

Environmental Determination: Categorical Exemption

Property Owner: Christine Meserve

Representative: Valerie Hart, Filed: 09.08.23

Recommended Action: Planning Commission approve application #23-0404 based on Conditions and Findings for Approval.

Applicant Proposal:

Plan revisions to a previously approved Design Permit for a remodel, addition, and ADU conversion to a single-family dwelling in the R-1 (Single-Family Residential) zoning district. The applicant is now proposing to change all exterior façade materials that were previously approved by the Planning Commission. Post decision administrative approval of changes for single family residential projects are limited to 25% of the façade materials. The proposed exterior change exceeds the limit, and therefore requires Planning Commission review.

Background:

On July 18, 2019, the Planning Commission approved a design permit (#19-0165) for a second story addition, ADU, and encroachment permit.

On February 20, 2020, the Planning Commission approved modifications to the original approval relating to the ADU.

On September 8, 2023, the applicant submitted the current application to revise the exterior materials.

Discussion:

The existing residence at 511 Escalona Drive is a nonconforming two-story single-family residence. The lot is surrounded by one- and two-story single-family homes. Under the 2019 application, the Planning Commission approved a design permit that replaced the original Spanish-style appearance with ground-floor stucco siding, a second story with board-and-batten siding, and replacement of the tile roof with composition shingle.

Capitola Zoning Code §17.156.070 outlines minor changes to an approved project that can be authorized administratively without returning to the original review authority, in this case the Planning Commission. Pursuant to §17.156.070(7)(d), alterations to the building façade are considered a minor change provided they affect less than twenty-five percent of the building façade and maintain the approved architectural style of the structure. The proposed alteration modifies all exterior siding, and therefore requires reapproval by the Planning Commission as a design permit amendment.

Proposed changes from the 2020 approval include the following:

1. First-story exterior material changed from stucco to vertical board and batten siding (cement fiberboard) on all elevations.
2. Second-story exterior material changed from vertical board and batten siding to shingle siding (cement fiber shingle).
3. Raise the first-story chimney one foot and use stone veneer siding instead of stucco.
4. Modified skylight layout.
5. Two windows removed on the south elevation, one enlarged window on the east elevation facing Sacramento Avenue.
6. Demolish the existing stucco wall and construct a redwood and hog-wire fence in the same location. Construct a new 42" tall sliding gate along the fence line in front of driveway.

The application does not alter the approved layout for the two units, does not increase the floor area, and does not require review of parking requirements.

Potential Second-Story Deck

In the 2019 application, the approved plans included a flat roof above the garage facing Sacramento Avenue. No access onto the flat roof was proposed, as a second story deck would have exceeded the maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR). The 2019 staff report noted a pending zoning code update, which would allow an exception to FAR for street facing second-story decks. The report also noted the applicant's intent to apply for a future change order if the proposed code change took effect. Between April 15, 2021, and March 8, 2023, the FAR exception for second story decks was in effect; however, the owner did not apply for a modification to convert the flat roof to a deck. A door was installed providing access to the flat roof without the required amendment to the building permit. The applicant plans to remove the door and install a window as shown on the current elevations and as required by Condition #4.

Revocable Encroachment Permit:

The prior application legalized an existing stucco wall that encroached into the unimproved right of way along both Escalona Drive and Sacramento Avenue. During building review, the applicant submitted a change order to modify the wall to include a sliding electric driveway gate and replace the existing stucco wall with wooden fencing in the same location. Modification to the encroachment was accepted by the Public Works Department.

CEQA:

Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines exempts minor alterations to existing private structures involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.

Attachments:

1. 511 Escalona Drive – Plan Set
2. 511 Escalona Drive – Color and Material Information
3. 511 Escalona Drive – Applicant Letter
4. 511 Escalona Drive – PC Staff Report – 02/6/2020

Conditions of Approval:

1. The project approval includes a design permit amendment for changes to the façade of the previously approved second-story addition and internal conversion ADU (approved ministerially). The permit amendment does not affect the floor area of the previous application. The proposed project is approved as indicated on the final plans reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission on October 5, 2023, except as modified through conditions imposed by the Planning Commission during the hearing.
2. All Conditions of Approval associated with permit #20-0002 are applicable to this permit.
3. Prior to issuance of building permit, all Planning fees associated with permit #23-0404 shall be paid in full.
4. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the second-story exterior doorway that opens onto the west facing flat roof must be removed. Openings adjacent to the flat roof area must follow the approved plans unless changes are approved in writing by the Community Development Department or Planning Commission.
5. Modifications to the approved revocable encroachment permit are subject to approval by either the Public Works Director or the Planning Commission, whichever applies.

Design Permit and CEQA Findings:

A. The proposed project is consistent with the general plan, local coastal program, and any applicable specific plan, area plan, or other design policies and regulations adopted by the city council.

Community Development Staff and the Planning Commission have reviewed the project. The proposed design alterations comply with the development standards of the R-1 zoning district. The project secures the purpose of the General Plan, and Local Coastal Program, and design policies and regulations adopted by the City Council.

B. The proposed project complies with all applicable provisions of the zoning code and municipal code.

Community Development Staff and the Planning Commission have reviewed the application for changes to the façade. The project complies with all applicable provisions of the zoning code and municipal code.

C. The proposed project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines exempts minor alterations to existing private structures involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. This approval is a modification to prior 2019 and 2020 approvals, which are cumulatively exempt under Section 15301(e). The modified approval involves aesthetic alterations which do not result in an expansion of use or floor area within the R-1 (Single-Family Residential) zoning district. No adverse environmental impacts were discovered during review of the proposed project.

D. The proposed development will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare or materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity.

The Planning Commission reviewed the project and determined that the proposed will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare or materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity.

E. The proposed project complies with all applicable design review criteria in Section 17.120.070 (Design review criteria).

The Community Development Staff and the Planning Commission have reviewed the application. The proposed façade changes comply with all applicable design review criteria in Section 17.120.070.

F. The proposed project maintains the character, scale, and development pattern of the neighborhood.

Community Development Staff and the Planning Commission have reviewed the application for façade changes. The modified residential design with a combination of board-and-batten and shingle siding, composition shingle roof, and stone veneer chimney will fit in nicely with the existing neighborhood. The project will maintain the character, scale, and development pattern of the neighborhood.

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