



CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES EXCERPTS

May 28, 2020

THOMAS EARL HOUSE BED & BREAKFAST – 1221 SEMINARY STREET (File No. PL18-0212) The Applicant, Marc Porat, requests approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to authorize major alterations to the Thomas Earl House, a National Register historic property located at 1221 Seminary Street. The proposed alterations would convert the existing single family residence to a Bed & Breakfast and add an addition on the rear of the Thomas Earl House, construct a basement beneath the structure, add accessory structures on either side of the Thomas Earl House, construct a swimming pool and other outdoor amenities, tree removal due to tree rot (ATCH-4) and to support the creation of a parking lot in the front setback. This is not a preservation, restoration, or reconstruction project per the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Rather, this is a Rehabilitation project which is defined as, “the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values.”

Rehabilitation includes construction of a new foundation and relocation of the Thomas Earl House 10 feet to the east toward Seminary Street. Parking is proposed between the relocated house and Seminary Street, which requires modification of setback requirements which is proposed as part of the Planned Development overlay request.

Commissioners provided disclosures.

Assistant Planner Elena Barragan presented the Staff Report and provided a recommendation.

The Commission had the following questions and comments for Staff:

- Is the recommendation of approval affirming that the additions and changes meet the Secretary of Interior’s Standards?
- Where is justification for additional structures, and subservience of additional structures and landscaping?
- Clarification was requested on weakest aspect of the proposal?
- Clarification was requested regarding justification under the Standards of removing landscaping, and additional structures?
- Clarification of height of carriage house, and proposed changes to the original structure.

Ms. Barragan responded:

- Correct, the recommendation of approval affirms that the additions and changes meet the Secretary of Interior’s Standards.
- The Secretary of Interior’s Standards, standard 10, the standards do allow additional structures if it supports a contemporary new use and allows the existing historic property to be brought to a state of utility. The new design shows compliance with the Standards.

- Erin Morris, Planning Manager, Staff's position is in the Staff Report, concern over basement, and maintenance of beauty of the historic property. The preliminary hearing from CHC, the fence height, additional structures and compliance was addressed the year prior.
- The Applicant's team recognized that it would require a significant amount of resources and that it was not feasible to continue as a single-family home.
- Approximately 23'10", historic structure is 26'10".

Marc Porat, the Applicant, briefed the Commission on background relating to the application and offered to answer Commissioner questions.

The Commission had the following questions and comments for the Applicant:

- When listing the defining characteristics, was the front setback one of them?
- Clarification, the reason needing to select rehabilitation over the other treatments was because of the significant damage?
- Clarification, rehabilitation is the best standard to use for this project.
- What is the material of the siding of the carriage house?
- Was there any other roofing considered besides the standing seam?

Mr. Porat responded to Commissioner questions:

- Yes, the setback was characterized as one of the defining characteristics, Historical Report identifies level of significance, and what and how they are changing.
- Yes, the use of the standard for rehabilitation was to have a viable project.
- Tim Deming, Applicant's Architect of Record identifies that the cottage is 6" horizontal, which is smaller in scale than the existing structure, and is consistent with the materials being used on the Thomas Earl House structure. The carriage house is approximately 80 feet long, has a cottage exactly the same sitting at the front of it which is similar to southern cottage, the carriage house is tongue and groove, and is a much more refined material.
- Tim Deming, about every other material, it is in keeping with the Napa look, there are similar structures in the region.

Chair Tuikka opened the item for Public Hearing.

Shelley Wolfe, worked with the Applicant, Marc Porat and is the President of Wine and Dine events and President of Protect Rural Napa, originally reluctant to listen to a development. Once listening to him and seeing his involvement with the neighbors, realized that this could have a good effect for Napa. Believes that this would a great restoration for the downtown Napa area.

Paul Wagner, lives in the Calistoga Avenue Historical District. Recognizes that the revised plan is much better than the previous plan. Shares concerns about parking and other Bed and Breakfasts in the area. Concern of losing residential nature of the neighborhood, interested in whether or not parking would be waived. Would be nice if people lived in the Calistoga Avenue Historic District.

Commissioner Ready, asked Mr. Wagner, to clarify question about parking. Chair Tuikka addressed one of the public comments about parking that Cultural Heritage Commission cannot discuss the use or parking standards, but whether the project is compliant with the Secretary of Interior's Standards and to review a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Michael Rogers, lives in Calistoga Avenue Historical District. Grew up in a country where people lived in homes like similar to Downton Abbey. Nobody can actually afford to have them as a single-family home. Glad to see cottages do not have the vertical modern siding. Overall, he believes there will be a net addition. Concern of Elm tree since it is an eminent hazard and encourages the Applicant to continue with it.

Madeline Rogers, lives in Calistoga Avenue Historical District. Admired Thomas Earl House before the damage but needed house before the earthquake. Personal preference does not mind moving the house forward is much more compatible with structures developed around the house. As a neighbor, met with the Applicant before he purchased the house, and said he always wanted to save the house and somehow make it economically viable. Sees that the business model is somewhat secondary to preserve the house. Will bring a net asset and will bring something that doesn't already exist in the area. Excited to have the house repaired and brought to its new life.

June Beeler, previous owner of the home. The trees are part of the historic landscape, there is so much to say, and fears could not state all of the facts why the Standard's are not met. The historic report seems to disregard or evade the Standard's. Cannot trust the Applicant for what he says, since he wrote a letter to her to make the property her personal residence, and then he recognized business opportunity so close to downtown. He talked with the neighbors, but never talked with me. Everyone has made horrendous mistakes in their report. Please do not give this project a Certificate of Appropriateness as it the project is proposed today. Very horrified with the structures are going to ruin the historic characteristic of the neighborhood.

After receiving no further comments, the Public Hearing was closed.

Commissioners discussed and began deliberation. Commissioners offered the following final comments and questions:

- Concern over movement of the structure, and consideration of whether the new setback was appropriate enough to support the Standard's. Happy to hear that neighbors believe moving the home would be more compatible. Very cognizant of those who have provided other feedback. But is supportive.
- Ambivalent about treatment of front of house, and landscape. In view of the distressed aspects of the property, and the Secretary of Interior's Standards that allows more leeway, appreciates the revised plans greatly and most of objections was concern that they would overwhelm the current structure, does not believe that is the case now.
- Appreciation that the original structure remains the most dominant structure. The roofing material is very modern, but it appears the Applicant and his team had reviewed other materials and found this most acceptable.
- The new structures are similar in style and are definitely in a new style than the existing house. Preserving buildings has changed, adaptive reuse is really necessary to have a use is viable, and otherwise structures would be demolished and the lot subdivided. The house will now be able to be saved, and acknowledges people believe it could be an intensification, but is in favor of the project as it saves the historic structure.

Commissioner MacDonald moved to forward a recommendation Seconded by Commissioner Ready to the City Council, approving a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Thomas Earl House Bed and Breakfast and determining that the action is exempt from the requirements of CEQA.

Motion carried:

AYES: Macdonald, Ready, Tuikka

NOES:

ABSTAIN: Van Giesen

ABSENT: Shotwell

RECUSED: