

CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

March 10, 2015 Meeting

Property Owner:

Seung Choon Lim
4365 Chevy Chase Drive
La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011

Case Type / Number:

Second Floor Review 14-43
Director's Miscellaneous Review 14-53 (Height)

Applicant:

De Angeles Designs, Inc.
650 Foothill Boulevard, Suite E
La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011

Site Address:

733 Craig Avenue

Case Planner:

Harriet Harris ~ Assistant Planner



1. Request:

The request is for Second Floor Review to construct a new, compliant two-story residence and detached garage comprising 3,765 sq. ft. A new trellis in the back yard is also proposed. The existing single-story residence has already been demolished as a condition of the Lot Line Adjustment that was recently approved by the Planning Commission. Also included as part of the request is a Height Modification for the detached garage.

2. Location:

The site is located on the north side of Craig Avenue, near its intersection with Commonwealth Avenue, in the R-1-10,000 zone.

3. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the request **BE APPROVED**, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to the draft resolution.

4. Project Size:

Lot area:	10,716 sq. ft.
Proposed 1 st floor:	1,937 sq. ft.
Proposed 2 nd floor:	1,360 sq. ft.
Detached Garage:	<u>467 sq. ft.</u>
Total:	3,764 sq. ft. (FAR: 0.35)

5. General Plan / Zoning / Existing Land Use:

The Land Use Map identifies the site as Low Density Residential – up to 4 Dwelling Units per Acre. The property is designated R-1-10,000 (Single Family Residential – 10,000 Square Foot Minimum Lot Size). The site was developed with a single-story residence and a detached garage and patio cover.

6. Environmental Impact Review:

Staff has determined that the proposed Floor Area Review is Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, under Class 2.5(c)(1) (new construction) of the City of La Cañada Flintridge Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA.

7. Previous Action:

LLA 14-03 approved 12/9/14 and revised 2/5/15

8. Pending and Potential Actions:

Plan check and issuance of building permit.

9. Staff Analysis:

A. Context:

The subject property is located on the north side of Craig Drive, between Commonwealth and Oakwood Avenues. The immediate neighborhood can be characterized as eclectic with many different style homes. A mixture of one and two-story homes are evident along the short street and around the corner on Commonwealth and Oakwood Avenues. Most of these homes blend well with the area's character. Adjacent lots vary greatly in size and are developed with one and two-story residences. The home immediately to the east is single-story and the lot to the west is vacant. Two-story residences are found further east along Craig Avenue.

The flat parcel was developed with a single-story residence and detached garage. The existing home was demolished as a condition of the Lot Line Adjustment that was approved December 2014 and revised in February 2015.

Parcel and house sizes vary greatly in the neighborhood as the following comparison chart reveals:

Address	Lot Size	House Size	FAR	Stories
701 Craig Avenue	11,220 S.F.	1,493 S.F.	.13	2
705 Craig Avenue	11,390 S.F.	3,614 S.F.	.32	1
711 Craig Avenue	11,390 S.F.	4,150 S.F.	.36	2
717 Craig Avenue	12,050 S.F.	3,275 S.F.	.27	2
721 Craig Avenue	11,617 S.F.	2,464 S.F.	.21	1
725 Craig Avenue	13,233 S.F.	1,590 S.F.	.12	2
727 Craig Avenue	11,617 S.F.	1,256 S.F.	.11	2
4806 Commonwealth Avenue	6,628 S.F.	1,302 S.F.	.20	1
4813 Commonwealth Avenue	17,500 S.F.	3,836 S.F.	.22	1
4832 Commonwealth Avenue	12,801 S.F.	2,210 S.F.	.17	1
4834 Commonwealth Avenue	10,122 S.F.	3,092 S.F.	.30	1
4836 Commonwealth Avenue	17,546 S.F.	4,038 S.F.	.23	2
4732 Oakwood Avenue	9,246 S.F.	2,564 S.F.	.28	1
4735 Oakwood Avenue	10,420 S.F.	1,567 S.F.	.15	1
4738 Oakwood Avenue	12,680 S.F.	2,406 S.F.	.19	1
4739 Oakwood Avenue	7,425 S.F.	1,574 S.F.	.21	1
4741 Oakwood Avenue	13,224 S.F.	2,911 S.F.	.22	2
4743 Oakwood Avenue	8,050 S.F.	1,780 S.F.	.22	1
AVERAGE	11,564 S.F.	2,507 S.F.		
733 Craig Avenue*	10,716 S.F.	3,297 S.F.	.31	2

**Project site – above figures exclude garages and other non-habitable areas and are intended for general comparison only.*

The above chart indicates that the size of the subject property is below the neighborhood average. The proposed residence is, however, above the neighborhood average with four homes that are greater in floor area and three that are comparable in FAR.

B. Project Description:

The project involves the construction of a new 3,297 sq. ft. with a detached 467 sq. ft. garage. A trellis is also proposed at the rear of the residence. The proposed residence is compliant with regard to all standards, including floor area, setbacks and building height. The detached garage would be sited forward of the proposed house and would be connected to the house by a courtyard wall. The garage would achieve a 19'-3" overall height, above the 15'-0" height limit for detached accessory structures but below the 21'-0" limit with a Director's Miscellaneous Review Height Modification.

The first floor would have a living, family and dining area, laundry room, as well as, a guest bedroom. Primary modulation of the first-floor footprint would occur at the forward-projecting garage and a trellised patio to the rear. Compliant setbacks of 25'-5" and 58'-0" would be

provided to the front and rear. First floor setbacks would be 7'-9" on the east side and 7'-3" on the west side. Total first-floor area would be 1,937 sq. ft. The detached garage would comprise 467 sq. ft. and would also have a compliant side setback.

A compact second floor central to the footprint would contain four bedrooms, including a master suite to the rear. The second floor would be recessed to the north and south to provide increased second-floor side setbacks of 14'-0" on the east side and 15'-1" on the west side. To the front, the second floor would sit behind the detached garage thereby creating a recessed massing effect as seen from the street. Hipped roofs would accent the second floor, which would comprise 1,360 sq. ft., increasing total project area to 3,764 sq. ft. (including the detached garage). This would be just under the maximum allowed for the site.

Maximum building height would be 28'-2" which is below the 32'-0" limit for the lot. The project also complies with the required angle plane. Only 18% of the roof would be flat, which is below the 25% allowance without additional review. Furthermore, the flat portion would not be visible from any adjacent neighbor or the street. It would merely allow roof wells to be created which keeps the structure's overall height lower.

New retaining walls/fences combinations are proposed along the east and west property lines. These would be inward facing to the subject property and the code allows up to 3' of retaining and 6' of free standing on top. A 36" tree located in front of the new garage would be retained as would the oak tree within the public right-of-way. A condition verifying the amount of landscaping within the front yard is also included.

Lastly, the A/C condensers, as indicated on the site plan, would have to be relocated to achieve compliant setbacks or apply for a Director's Miscellaneous Review to be located behind the garage as proposed. A condition is included that addresses this issue.

In all, the request compares with code standards as follows:

	<u>Standard:</u>	<u>Project:</u>
Floor Area:	3,765 sq. ft.	3,764 sq. ft.
Front-Yard SB:	25'-5"	25'-5"
East Side-Yard SB		
1 st floor:	7'-0"	7'-9"
2 nd floor:	14'-0"	14'-0"
West Side-Yard SB		
1 st floor:	7'-0"	7'-3"
2 nd floor:	14'-0"	15'-1"
Rear SB (to the trellis):	15'-0"	59'-0"
Height:	32'-0"	28'-2"
Garage Height:	15'-0"	19'-3"

C. Second Floor Review:

Discussion

Given the development pattern apparent along Craig Avenue and frequency of other two-story homes, the attractive French Eclectic design, with its well-proportioned massing and numerous accents (tall, steeply pitched hip roof and an arched front entry door) is compatible within the area. While the adjacent lot to the east, as well as, the flag lot behind it is developed with smaller one-story homes, other lots in the immediate area are developed with larger homes, especially further east along Craig Avenue. The proposed second floor has no windows along the east side and a small bathroom window on the west side. The vacant lot next door is also owned by the owner of 733 Craig Avenue and will eventually be developed with a new home.

The two-story massing of the primary structure is set back more than 56'-0" from the front property line and partially screened by the existing 36" diameter tree and the proposed detached garage. Additional screening in the rear yard along the east and west property line would alleviate any privacy concerns. A condition of approval has been added to provide screening along those property lines.

In summary, staff has no major concerns with the scale, design and siting of the home, which respects the size and constraints of the lot and integrates well with the eclectic character of the immediate area. Positive Second Floor Review findings are accordingly recommended.

Findings

1. The two-story design includes adequate setbacks, screening and modulation.

The project offers compliant setbacks at both floor levels and second-floor recess to the front in order to afford visually adequate separation from neighboring homes and the street. Ample building modulation is apparent in the recession between floor levels, well-proportioned roof form, and façade details. Additional perimeter screening in the rear yard would help to screen the new second floor. Staff supports the finding.

2. The two-story design preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

The area is characterized by two-story homes of comparable size and scale, while the home's position on the subject lot and associated visibility would not upset the prevailing street setting. Staff supports the finding.

3. The two-story design protects public views, aesthetics, privacy and property values of the neighbors.

The proposed scale is not excessive given the character of the area and public views would not be significantly compromised while the second-floor window arrangements are

not anticipated to have an adverse privacy impact. Staff supports the finding.

4. The two-story design is consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines as adopted by resolution of the City Council.

The siting, scale and design of the project, with its refined massing and detail, is appropriate for both the subject lot and area, and would be consistent with the primary directives of the City's Residential Design Guidelines as related to neighborhood and streetscape compatibility. Staff supports the finding.

D. Director's Miscellaneous Review:

Discussion

According to the Zoning Code, the proposed detached garage is limited to 15'-0" in overall height. The applicant is proposing a 19'-3" overall height for the garage. It would be sited forward of the house and separated by more than 10'-0" from the primary structure and would have a compliant 7'-9" side-yard setback. The Director of Community Development can approve an over-height accessory structure up to 21'-0" through a Director's Miscellaneous Review. The accessory structure's roofline would match the roof pitch of the proposed existing residence which is consistent with the required findings for this excess height approval. The project would have limited view or use impact on the immediate area as evidenced by the following findings:

Findings

1. The excess height accommodates an architectural objective, as dictated by style, scale, and/or architectural consistency with the subject structure or other structures in visual proximity.

The excess height is a product of matching the new residence's architectural style and roof pitch. The project would achieve a 19'-3" overall height from lowest adjacent grade. The project would achieve a legitimate architectural objective by matching the roof style and pitch of the proposed residence. Staff supports the finding.

2. The proposed project preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood, and protects public views, and aesthetic and other property values in such neighborhoods in a manner which is compatible with reasonable development of the subject lot.

The excess height would occur outside the required side yard of the subject property. The project would match the roof style and pitch of the proposed residence and would be partially screened by existing landscaping. Staff supports the finding.

E. Recommendation:

Based on the above discussion, staff has determined that the project is appropriate for the site and area. Thus, staff recommends that the Second Floor and Director's Miscellaneous Review (Height) requests **BE APPROVED**, subject to conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to the draft resolution.

cc: *Seung Choon Lim / 4365 Chevy Chase Drive / La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011*
De Angeles Designs, Inc. / 650 Foothill Boulevard, Suite E / La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011



RESOLUTION NO. 15-xx

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE
APPROVING SECOND-FLOOR REVIEW 14-43
AND DIRECTOR'S MISCELLANEOUS REVIEW (HEIGHT) 14-53
TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY
SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE
WITH A 19'-3" HIGH DETACHED GARAGE
AT 733 CRAIG AVENUE
AS REQUESTED BY
Seung Choon Lim**

WHEREAS, a request by Seung Choon Lim has been received for Second Floor Review and Director's Miscellaneous Review (Height) to allow the construction of a new two-story residence with an over-height accessory structure, said request attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, on March 10, 2015, after public noticing in the prescribed manner, held a public hearing and conducted a review of the request; and

WHEREAS, the Commission reviewed the project and determined that no significant environmental impacts would result from the project, which is Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, under Section 2.5(c)(1)(new construction) of the City of La Cañada Flintridge Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed the facts contained in the staff report dated March 10, 2015, regarding the application for Second-floor Review and Director's Miscellaneous Review (Height) at 733 Craig Avenue, and heard and considered the testimony of the applicant and the public; and

WHEREAS, based on the evidence presented by the application materials, staff report, and public testimony, the Planning Commission finds the following:

Section 1:

Second Floor Review:

1. The two-story design includes adequate setbacks, screening and modulation because the project offers compliant setbacks at both floor levels and second-floor recess to the front in order to afford visually adequate separation from neighboring homes and the street. Ample building modulation is apparent in the recession between floor levels, well-proportioned roof form, and façade details.

Additional perimeter screening in the rear yard would help to screen the new second floor.

2. The two-story design preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood because the area is characterized by two-story homes of comparable size and scale, while the home's position on the subject lot and associated visibility would not upset the prevailing street setting.
3. The two-story design protects public views, aesthetics, privacy and property values of the neighbors because the proposed scale is not excessive given the character of the area and public views would not be significantly compromised while the second-floor window arrangements are not anticipated to have an adverse privacy impact.
4. The two-story design is consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines as adopted by resolution of the City Council because the siting, scale and design of the project, with its refined massing and detail, is appropriate for both the subject lot and area, and would be consistent with the primary directives of the City's Residential Design Guidelines as related to neighborhood and streetscape compatibility.

Director's Miscellaneous Review:

1. The excess height accommodates an architectural objective, as dictated by style, scale, and/or architectural consistency with the subject structure or other structures in visual proximity since the excess height is a product of matching the new residence's architectural style and roof pitch. The project would achieve a 19'-3" overall height from lowest adjacent grade. The project would achieve a legitimate architectural objective by matching the roof style and pitch of the proposed residence.
2. The proposed project preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood, and protects public views, and aesthetic and other property values in such neighborhoods in a manner which is compatible with reasonable development of the subject lot because the excess height would occur outside the required side yard of the subject property. The project would match the roof style and pitch of the proposed residence and would be partially screened by existing landscaping. Staff supports the finding.

Section 2:

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Planning Commission approves the Second Floor Review and Director's Miscellaneous Review (Height) request at 733 Craig Avenue, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to this resolution.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 10th day of March, 2015.

Chair of the Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Secretary to the Planning Commission

EXHIBIT "A"
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
SECOND FLOOR REVIEW 14-43
DIRECTOR'S MISCELLANEOUS REVIEW (Height) 14-53
733 Craig Avenue

1. Compliance with and execution of all conditions listed herein shall be necessary prior to obtaining final building inspection clearance and/or prior to obtaining any occupancy clearance. Deviation from this requirement shall be only by written consent of the Director of Community Development.
2. This approval is granted for the land or land use as described in the application and any attachments thereto, and as shown on the site plan submitted, labeled Second Floor Review 14-43 and Director's Miscellaneous Review (Height) 14-53.
3. Prior to obtaining a building permit or when applicable initiation of use, the applicant and property owner shall file with the Secretary of the Planning Commission written acknowledgment of the conditions stated herein on forms provided by the Planning Department.
4. All structures, site work and other features including but not limited to, buildings, roadways, parking areas, landscaping and other facilities shall be located and maintained as shown on the project plans labeled Second Floor Review 14-43 and Director's Miscellaneous Review (Height) 14-53, Sheets 1-4, except as otherwise stated in these conditions.
5. This approval will expire unless "start of construction" is commenced within 12 months after approval is granted and diligently pursued thereafter. The Director of Community Development may extend the original expiration date by as much as 12 months upon receipt of a written request from the applicant prior to expiration of the original approval if the approved project and applicable zoning standards are unchanged. Start of construction is defined as:
 - a. All zoning and related approvals are effective; and
 - b. All required building and grading permits for the project have been issued; and
 - c. The "foundation inspection" and "concrete slab or underfloor inspection" have been made and received approval from the Division of Building and Safety; i.e., all trenches must be excavated, forms erected, and all materials for the foundation delivered on the job and all in-slab or underfloor building service equipment, conduit, piping accessories and other ancillary equipment items must be in place. Nothing in this definition shall be construed to alter the applicable legal standards for determining when vested property rights to complete the project have arisen.

6. All applicable requirements of any law, ordinance, or regulation of the City of La Cañada Flintridge shall be complied with.
7. This approval is subject to the applicant paying all fees, deposits and assessments to the City of La Cañada Flintridge, as established by policy, ordinance or resolution of the City Council prior to occupancy or initiation of use. This includes payment for contracted staff services as invoiced to the city.
8. In the event the City determines that it is necessary to take legal action to enforce any of the provisions of these conditions, and such legal action is taken, the applicant agrees to pay any and all costs of such legal action, including reasonable attorney's fees, incurred by the City, even if the matter is not prosecuted to a final judgment or is amicably resolved, unless the City should otherwise agree with the applicant to waive said fees or any part thereof. The foregoing shall not apply if the permittee prevails in the enforcement proceeding.
9. The applicant shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City and its officers, agents, and employees from any claim, action or proceeding against the City or its officers, agents, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul approval of this Second-floor Review. The City shall promptly notify the applicant of any such claim, action, or proceeding and shall cooperate fully in the defense.
10. An approval granted by the Planning Commission does not constitute a building permit or authorization to begin any construction. An appropriate permit issued by the Division of Building and Safety must be obtained prior to construction, enlargement, relocation, conversion, or demolition of any building or structure within the City.
11. All construction/contractor parking shall be on-site only. If it is deemed by the Director of Community Development that sufficient on-site parking may not be available, then on-street parking in front of the site will be permitted if it can be demonstrated that such parking will not interfere with the immediate neighbors, and will not interfere with the public's use of the surrounding streets. If this cannot be found, then any additional construction vehicle or equipment parking must occur off-site at a location approved by the Director of Community Development. Approval of the off-site location shall be based on the submittal of a Parking Management Plan by the applicant that demonstrates that the site shall not interfere with the neighbors in the area or hinder the public's use of the surrounding streets. Contractors and construction workers will be required to carpool to the construction site. No construction, no deliveries and no movement of construction materials shall occur on Sundays or City recognized holidays.
12. Any subsequent substantive change to these approved plans by the Fire Department or any other agency having subsequent approval authority shall cause these plans to be returned to the Planning Commission for additional review and approval prior to permit issuance.

13. Primary roof and wall colors shall be reviewed and approved by staff prior to issuance of building permits.
14. Unless this approval is appealed to the City Council, story poles shall be removed promptly (within one week) after expiration of the 15-day appeal period. Verification of this shall be required prior to submittal of the project for plan check OR prior to issuance of building permits for those projects where “at-risk” plan check is in process or has already been completed.
15. Additional landscape screening shall be provided in the rear yard along the east and west side property lines to screen the new second floor from off-site views. The species, number, plant size and spacing of said trees and/or shrubs shall be indicated on landscape plan subject to the review and approval by the Director of Community Development prior to issuance of any permits. No final clearance/occupancy shall be granted until the Director of Community Development or his designee confirms that the landscaping installation is complete and consistent with the approved plan.
16. Verification that the project satisfies the minimum front-yard landscaping requirement shall be submitted for review and approval by the Director of Community Development prior to plan check.
17. The A/C condensers located within the east side setback requirement shall be relocated to a compliant setback or a minimum of 5'-0” with the written acceptance of the equipment location from the owner of the affected adjacent property. Relocation on the project plans or the written acceptance from the neighbor shall be provided to the Planning Department prior to plan check submittal.
18. An encroachment and/or excavation permit shall be required for any work within the public right-of-way. A site plan shall be provided indicating all existing and proposed improvements within the public right-of-way.
19. No above ground structures are to be constructed within the public ROW.
20. Type of mailbox structure to be approved by Public Works prior to occupancy.
21. An encroachment and/or excavation permit is required for work within the public ROW.
22. The ROW behind the edge of pavement shall have a 2% to 4% slope graded to drain towards the street subject to the review and approval of the Public Works Director and verification prior to occupancy.

23. Any proposed new driveway apron shall conform to the provisions of Chapter 8.01 of the Municipal Code and the Standard Plans for Public Works Construction (SPPWC), latest edition.
24. Remove existing wall in public right of way and re-grade parkway or relocate wall behind property line prior to occupancy.