



# Historic Preservation Commission

## Staff Report

August 3, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Discussion of ADU Design Standards

**PROJECT PLANNER:** Geoffrey Starns, AICP, LEED AP BD+C, Historic Preservation Supervisor 

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At the July 6 Historic Preservation Commission meeting, the Commission ask staff to put a discussion item regarding the design of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in historic districts.

### **CURRENT REQUIREMENTS:**

Currently if an ADU meets the following requirements, staff reviews the project through a plan check. An ADU must meet the following requirements:

1. Architectural style (e.g. Craftsman, Victorian, Modern, etc.), architectural detailing (e.g. exposed rafters, knee braces, decorative tile, etc.), construction materials, finishes, and colors, door trim and style, and window trim and style (i.e., grid pattern, frame thickness, opening direction, etc.) must be the same as the existing structure;
2. The ADU has to be to the rear of the primary structure;
3. The side- and rear-yard setbacks are at least four (4) feet;
4. The peak height above grade is sixteen (16) feet or less;
5. The maximum site coverage for all structures is 35%;
6. Distance between the ADU and the main structure is 10 feet;
7. The distance between an ADU and another accessory structure is 6 feet; and
8. Depending on lot size, the maximum ADU size is 1,200 sq. ft.

If a proposed ADU is demolishing an existing accessory structure, a Minor Certificate of Appropriateness is required according to the 1999 Design Guidelines. If an addition is proposed, a Major Certificate of Appropriateness is required.

## **PROPOSAL:**

Staff is proposing to keep all the existing requirements, and adding new requirements. The following are the new requirements:

1. Any proposed demolition of an existing structure (main or garage, as long as it contributes to the significance of the property) shall require approval of a Certificate of Deconstruction approved by the Commission;
2. An addition to an existing accessory structure shall face the interior of the property to the extent feasible; and
3. Entry of an ADU shall face the interior of the property and not be visible from the street to the extent feasible. There is one exception to this rule. A new structure containing an ADU facing the street side of a corner lot may have the entry facing the street.

## **ADDITIONAL OPTIONS:**

One proposal that the Commission mentioned on July 6, 2022 was keeping the visual appearance of the original garage door, even if it does not operate. Staff has researched this issue and has found a couple of different ways of dealing with this. One way is to visually create the appearance of a garage door in the new wall, so from the exterior there is no change in appearance. This option presents some problems because there is one less wall with windows, which can create some lighting and exiting issues. This type of alteration, depending on the way it is done would be difficult to remove and not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards.

Another option staff found was to keep the frame of the door and allow the inside the frame to be changed and include, wall, windows, doors. This option meets the Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards, as the "addition" is removable.

Staff's recommendation is that no matter which option(s) the Commission choose that the garage doorframe should remain. In addition, staff recommends that a new infill wall does not try to match the appearance of the existing accessory structure but should complement and be compatible with the structure. For example, if the accessory structure has a stucco exterior, the new infill wall does not have a stucco wall to match. Trying to match the existing structure with the frame remaining would create a false history that is contrary to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommends that all the current requirements (1-8), the three proposed additions, and keeping the doorframe be included as requirements. In addition, whichever direction the Commission chooses on the garage door will be included. Staff will then create a Guide to ADUs and include these guidelines in the Alteration and the New Development sections of the Guidelines.

Staff is also interested to hear any other ideas that would protect our historic properties while allowing residents to create ADUs.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Pomona's ADU Regulations