



CITY OF GLENDALE, CA

DESIGN REVIEW STAFF REPORT – SINGLE FAMILY

June 26, 2025 <i>Hearing Date</i>	1728 Don Carlos Avenue <i>Address</i>
Design Review Board (DRB) <i>Review Type</i>	5653-012-005 <i>APN</i>
PDR-004630-2025 <i>Case Number</i>	Steve Snodgress <i>Applicant</i>
Nikola Hlady, Senior Planner <i>Case Planner</i>	Steve Snodgress <i>Owner</i>

Project Summary

The applicant is proposing to construct a 75-foot long stucco-coated block wall with a maximum height of six feet, one pedestrian gate and one vehicular gate, along with new landscaping in the front yard. The new wall will be located outside the front setback and will replace an existing wrought-iron fence that was damaged by a vehicle collision.

The proposed work includes:

- The new stucco wall will have pilasters with capstones and ledgerstone veneer on its east and west ends and adjacent to the stained wood pedestrian and vehicular gate.
- Light fixtures are proposed for the pilasters on both sides of both gates.
- New drought tolerant landscaping is proposed along the wall elevation that is facing the street.

Environmental Review

The project is exempt from CEQA review as a Class 3 "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" exemption pursuant to Section 15303 of the State CEQA Guidelines because the project is to construct a new block wall and gates.

Existing Property/Background

The project site is a rectangular, 13,875-square-foot (SF) lot located with frontage on Don Carlos Avenue. The property is located mid-block with a 75-foot frontage and a depth of 185-feet. Originally developed in 1950, the property currently features a 1,399-SF, one-story single-family dwelling with an attached carport located towards the rear of the lot. In 1989, a 384-SF cabin-style guest house was built that is located in the middle of the lot in front of the primary residence. A driveway along the western side of the property provides vehicular access to the carport attached to the back house.

In 1995, a building permit was issued for a 6-foot tall wrought-iron fence located 25-feet south of the front property line, outside of the setback area, to secure the property. This fence was significantly damaged in early 2024 when a car collided into it. The owner was issued a stop work order later that year for constructing a block wall in the same location. After discussion and coordination with Planning staff, the applicant submitted an application for Design Review Board approval for the proposed block wall.

Staff Recommendation

Approve with Conditions

Last Date Reviewed / Decision

First time submittal for final review.

Zone: RI FAR District: I

Although this design review does not convey final zoning approval, the project has been reviewed for consistency with the applicable Codes and no inconsistencies have been identified.

Active/Pending Permits and Approvals

There is an open Code Enforcement case (PV-0939-11-2024) for the replacement of the existing wrought-iron fence with a new block wall without the necessary permits. Obtaining the necessary approvals from the Planning and Building and Safety divisions for the wall will correct the violation.

Site Slope and Grading

None proposed.

Neighborhood Survey

The applicant is requesting DRB approval of a new block wall, so a neighborhood survey for adjoining properties' lot size, setback, height, number of stories and FAR is not required. The applicant has provided examples of nearby properties with walls located in or near street front and/or street sides setback areas that were architecturally integrated with the homes and that did not detract from the neighborhood streetscape. See Exhibit 4.

DESIGN ANALYSIS

Site Planning

Are the following items satisfactory and compatible with the project site and surrounding area?

Building Location

yes n/a no

If "no" select from below and explain:

- Setbacks of buildings on site
- Prevailing setbacks on the street
- Building and decks follow topography

Garage Location and Driveway

yes **n/a** **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- Predominant pattern on block
- Compatible with primary structure
- Permeable paving material
- Decorative paving

Landscape Design

yes **n/a** **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- Complementary to building design
- Maintains existing trees when possible
- Maximizes permeable surfaces
- Appropriately sized and located

Walls and Fences

yes **n/a** **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- Appropriate style/color/material
- Perimeter walls treated at both sides
- Retaining walls minimized
- Appropriately sized and located

Determination of Compatibility: Site Planning

The proposed site planning is appropriate, as modified by any proposed conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The property’s site planning is not the typical configuration found in single-family zones. With the accessory guest house located in front of the primary residence, the buildings are setback significantly from the street, leaving a large amount of front yard area, which is a unique condition in the neighborhood.
- The City’s Comprehensive Design Guidelines generally discourage front yard fences and walls in order to maintain an open appearance along the streetscape. For this property, given the depth and site configuration, locating a wall at the 25-foot minimum front setback line is appropriate in terms of site planning as it still maintains the open appearance encouraged by the guidelines, while also securing the large property.
- The proposed wall and gates are architecturally treated in a manner that is consistent with existing development on the property, is compatible for the neighborhood context and meets the City’s Design Guidelines, as described below in the Design and Detailing section.

- New drought tolerant landscaping which includes shrubs and bougainvillea vines are proposed in the front yard area and along the walls. Combined with existing mature trees, the appearance of the wall will be softened when viewed from the public right-of-way.
- New decorative paving for the driveway and new walkway in the front setback area are proposed, representing an enhancement of the existing asphalt driveway. No specific information is included with the submittal as it relates to the new paving. A staff recommended condition of approval will require this to be provided prior to final Planning approval.

Massing and Scale

Are the following items satisfactory and compatible with the project site and surrounding area?

Building Relates to its Surrounding Context

yes **n/a** **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- Appropriate proportions and transitions
- Relates to predominant pattern
- Impact of larger building minimized

Building Relates to Existing Topography

yes **n/a** **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- Form and profile follow topography
- Alteration of existing land form minimized
- Retaining walls terrace with slope

Consistent Architectural Concept

yes **n/a** **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- Concept governs massing and height

Scale and Proportion

yes **n/a** **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- Scale and proportion fit context
- Articulation avoids overbearing forms
- Appropriate solid/void relationships
- Entry and major features well located
- Avoids sense of monumentality

Roof Forms

yes n/a no

If "no" select from below and explain:

- Roof reinforces design concept
- Configuration appropriate to context

Determination of Compatibility: Mass and Scale

The proposed massing and scale are appropriate, as modified by any proposed conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The new block wall shall be located outside the 25-foot street-front setback area which aligns appropriately with existing adjacent buildings, maintaining consistency and rhythm across the streetscape.
- The wall's 6-foot height is typical, while its 75-foot span is softened through the introduction of pilasters and gates, along with plantings both on and in front of the wall. Together, these features allow the wall to fit well into the existing neighborhood context and represent an enhancement over the previously existing 6-foot tall wrought-iron fence.
- The wall features a unified, consistent architectural concept, employing materials and natural colors that are familiar to the neighborhood.

Design and Detailing

Are the following items satisfactory and compatible with the project site and surrounding area?

Overall Design and Detailing

yes n/a no

If "no" select from below and explain:

- Consistent architectural concept
- Proportions appropriate to project and surrounding neighborhood
- Appropriate solid/void relationships

Entryway

yes n/a no

If "no" select from below and explain:

- Well integrated into design
- Avoids sense of monumentality
- Design provides appropriate focal point
- Doors appropriate to design

Windows

yes n/a no

If “no” select from below and explain:

- Appropriate to overall design
- Placement appropriate to style
- Recessed in wall, when appropriate

Privacy

yes **n/a** **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- Consideration of views from “public” rooms and balconies/decks
- Avoid windows facing adjacent windows

Finish Materials and Color

yes **n/a** **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- Textures and colors reinforce design
- High-quality, especially facing the street
- Respect articulation and façade hierarchy
- Wrap corners and terminate appropriately

Paving Materials

yes **n/a** **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- Decorative material at entries/driveways
- Permeable paving when possible
- Material and color related to design

No additional information is provided regarding the proposed paving material. Staff is recommending a condition of approval requiring the applicant to provide product information for staff review and approval.

Lighting, Equipment, Trash, and Drainage

yes **n/a** **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- Light fixtures appropriately located/avoid spillover and over-lit facades
- Light fixture design appropriate to project
- Equipment screened and well located
- Trash storage out of public view
- Downspouts appropriately located
- Vents, utility connections integrated with design, avoid primary facades

Ancillary Structures

yes **n/a** **no**

If “no” select from below and explain:

- Design consistent with primary structure
- Design and materials of gates complement primary structure

Determination of Compatibility: Design and Detailing

The proposed design and detailing are appropriate, as modified by any proposed conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The design of the stucco wall and its detailing, including pilasters with capstones and stone veneers, stained wood gates, and architecturally appropriate lighting fixtures present a unified architectural concept that enhances both the property and the overall streetscape.
- The stained wood pedestrian and vehicular gate provide well-defined entry points for vehicles and pedestrians while also effectively securing the property.
- The wall uses high-quality finish materials such as textured stucco and stone veneer accents that are compatible with both the existing buildings on the subject property, and those in the near vicinity, to present an appealing appearance to the public right-of-way while also maintaining the neighborhood’s open landscaped feel.
- The wall uses a natural color palette that blends appropriately into the Don Carlos Avenue streetscape, which features a mix of Spanish Colonial Revival, Ranch and Minimal Traditional style homes with ample, well-landscaped front yards.
- The project will introduce decorative paving for the front setback area’s driveway and pedestrian path, representing a further enhancement of the previous wrought-iron gate and existing asphalt driveway. No additional information is provided regarding the driveway material, and staff is recommending a condition of approval to address this.

Recommendation / Draft Record of Decision

Based on the above analysis, staff recommends **Approval with Conditions**. This determination is based on the implementation of the following recommended conditions:

Conditions

1. That the applicant shall provide information regarding the proposed permeable paving material for staff review and approval.

Exhibits

1. Reduced Plans
2. Photos of Existing Property
3. Location Map
4. Neighborhood Survey