



**CITY OF GLENDALE, CA
REPORT TO THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

DESIGN REVIEW STAFF REPORT – SINGLE FAMILY

Meeting/Decision Date: July 8, 2021

Address: 1248 Corona Drive

Review Authority:

APN: 5679-016-001, 5679-016-002,
5679-016-024

☒ DRB ☐ ADR ☐ HPC ☐ CC

Case Number: PDR2004770

Applicant: Eduardo J. Carrillo

Prepared By: Dennis Joe, Planner

Owner: Aligned Properties, LLC

Project Summary

To construct a new two-story, 2,176 square-foot, single-family dwelling with an attached 545 square-foot, two-car garage on a vacant, 8,889 square-foot lot, zoned R1R (FAR District III) with an average current slope of approximately 70%.

Existing Property/Background

The subject site is a vacant lot in the Adams Hill neighborhood with an up-sloping topography that steeply ascends from the western property line along Corona Drive to the rear property line. Surrounding the subject site are other R1R zoned properties with existing single-family dwellings to the east and west, and vacant lots to the north and south. The surface of the site is mostly bare, with patches of scrubland and trees scattered throughout the property. There are no protected indigenous tree species on or within 20 feet of the property.

This project was reviewed by the Design Review Board on February 22, 2018, January 10, 2019, and approved on May 28, 2020. The project was appealed to City Council, and on March 9, 2021, Council voted to "Remand" this project back to the DRB via motion with additional outlined considerations (Exhibit 2). Additional discussion about the City Council's considerations and staff's analysis is provided below.

Staff Recommendation

☐ Approve ☒ Approve with Conditions ☐ Return for Redesign ☐ Deny

Last Date Reviewed / Decision

☐ First time submittal for final review.

☒ Other: This project was approved by the DRB on May 28, 2020 and appealed to the City Council. On March 9, 2021, the City Council remanded this project back to the DRB with further considerations.

Zone: R1R **FAR District:** II

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

- ☒ None
☐ Other:

CEQA Status:

- ☐ The project is exempt from CEQA review as a Class 1 "Existing Facilities" exemption pursuant to Section 15301 of the State CEQA Guidelines because .
- ☐ 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 .
- ☒ Other: An Initial Study was prepared and circulated 5/1/2020 until 5/21/2020 for a 20-day review period. The Final Mitigated Negative Declaration is attached.

Site Slope and Grading

- ☐ None proposed
- ☐ Less than 50% current average slope and less than 1500 cubic yards of earth movement (cut and/or fill); no additional review required.
- ☐ 1500 cubic yards or greater of earth movement:
- ☒ 50% or greater current average slope:
70% with approximately 1,038 cubic yards of grading (45 CY fill and 933 CY export).

Comparison of Neighborhood Survey:

	Average of Properties within 300 linear feet of subject property	Range of Properties within 300 linear feet of subject property	Subject Property Proposal
Lot size	6,719 sq. ft.	2,749 sq. ft. - 16,045 sq. ft.	8,889 sq. ft.
Setback	16'-6"	3'-2" - 68'-4"	16'-0"
House size	1,871 sq. ft.	962 sq. ft. - 3,198 sq. ft.	2,176 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio	0.38	0.07 - 0.69	0.24
Number of stories	primarily 2-story	primarily 2-story	2-story

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

The proposed building location is based on the steep upsloping topography and the wide, relatively narrow lot. The house will be built into the hillside to locate the majority of the mass into the slope and allow the profile to reflect the sloping topography. Code compliant setbacks are provided, with 16-feet at street front, 12-feet, 6-inches at the north (side), approximately 76-feet at the south (side), and 10-feet at the rear. The total amount of grading will be approximately 1,038 cubic yards, which 933 cubic yards will be cut exported offsite and 45 cubic yards will be filled onsite.

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

Vehicular access onto the property will be via a driveway 18-feet in length that connects to Corona Drive. The driveway will feature a geometric pattern of grey concrete with breaks filled with black pebbles for permeability and enhancement of the surface.

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

California-friendly landscaping will be provided around the perimeter of the new dwelling with an emphasis at the street front and the side yards. The landscape palette will include a variety of low-water usage shrubs such as agaves, aloe, deer grass, lantana and New Zealand flax. A total of five, 24 inch-box trees (Honey Mesquite) are provided throughout the property to enhance the design of the site. In lieu of the hydroseed landscaping proposed at the southern portion of the lot, staff recommends this area be landscaped with a mix of California-friendly groundcovers and shrubs.

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 two-story dwelling will be built into the up sloping terrain, which will allow the building mass to respond to the hillside slope.
- The setbacks and driveway configurations for the building are considerate of the prevailing neighborhood pattern and will comply with code standards.
- The landscape design will complement the site design and provide a natural look to the hillside with a variety of California-friendly shrubs and trees. The overall landscape design will help blend the building into the natural hillside.
- In lieu of the hydroseed landscaping proposed at the southern portion of the lot, a conditioned is recommended for this area to be landscaped with a mix of California-friendly groundcovers and shrubs.

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

There are single-family dwellings to the east and west, and vacant lots to the north and south of the subject site. Corona Drive is a narrow local street which slopes up on the north side of the street and downward on the south side. The neighborhood pattern along Corona Drive consists of multi-level dwellings on the downsloping parcels that appear to be one-story from the street. Most parcels on the north side of the street are vacant and consist of steep lots. Though not present on this block, residential development on steep, upsloping lots is common throughout the Adams Hill Neighborhood. Houses fronting onto Vista Superba Street are located higher up on the slope, overlooking Corona Drive. While the site is steep with a 70% average current slope, the project relates well with the surrounding context because a large portion of the house is built into the hillside. The design of the dwelling is well articulated with multiple breaks and reads as separate volumes further breaking up the mass of the building.

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

The project site has an up-sloping topography that steeply ascends from the western property line along Corona Drive to the rear property line. The building's first level will be set back 16 feet from Corona Drive and the building's second level will be set back an additional 3 to 5 feet further allow the building's profile to terrace with the hillside.

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

Since the Board's determination of approval and City Council's review of the appeal, the remanded project back to the Design Review Board has been revised to provide a narrower street facing façade by removing an additional 12'-4" off the south portion of the building to address the City Council's consideration calling for a further reduction of length/width. Similar to the previous design reviewed by the DRB, the house is broken into separate volumes and includes variations at the street facing elevation helping to diminish the apparent size and scale. The house maintains a horizontal emphasis to complement the site's wide street frontage and limited depth.

Roof Forms

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- ☐ Roof reinforces design concept
- ☒ Configuration appropriate to context

The new dwelling has maintained its design as a contemporary style and incorporates a combination of flat and shed and roofs with height variations to provide articulation and visual interest.

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 two-story dwelling will be built into the upslope hillside of the property to reduce the appearance of a monumental structure. The building's first level will be set back 16 feet from Corona Drive and the building's second level will be set back an additional three to five feet further to allow the building's profile to terrace with the hillside.
- The design of the dwelling is well articulated with multiple breaks and is designed as separate volumes further breaking up the mass of the building.
- The flat and shed roof design is appropriate to the scale and proportions of the building. The roof line varies in height complementing the contemporary design of the new dwelling.

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**

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

The windows coordinate well with the contemporary design through the use of a combination of recessed aluminum-clad wood windows and aluminum framed storefront windows.

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
- ☐ Natural colors used in hillside areas

Quality materials are incorporated within the design to include smooth stucco, vertical wooden rainscreen siding (Ipe wood), metal roof and a stainless steel railing system, which will occur at various locations across the facades.

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

The driveway will be laid with a sand finished gray concrete material and designed with a geometric pattern interlaced with 1/2 inch black polished pebbles. The paving material at the driveway should be reduced to the approximate width of the garage door to comply with the Zoning Code, as well as introduce additional landscaping at the front yard.

Equipment, Trash, and Drainage

☒ **yes** ☐ **n/a** ☐ **no**

If "no" select from below and explain:

- ☐ 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 immediate neighborhood is comprised of a variety of simply styled single-family dwellings. The proposed Contemporary style of the dwelling is well designed and appropriate to the neighborhood context.
- The dwelling's finish materials include smooth stucco, vertical wooden rainscreen siding (Ipe wood), and a stainless steel railing system. These will provide an appropriate variety of textures and color that will enhance the design.
- The windows and doors coordinate well with the design of the building. A combination of recessed aluminum-clad wood windows and aluminum framed storefront windows will be placed throughout the dwelling.

Recommendation / Draft Record of Decision

Based on the above analysis, staff recommends **approval** of the project with **conditions**, as follow:

Considerations from the City Council on March 9, 2021 (PDR 1621615-B)

- 1. Reduce the mass and scale of the proposed home by further reducing the length/width of the proposed home in the range of 15% to 20% to make it less monumental in appearance from Corona Drive.**
 - The prior design of the dwelling approved by the DRB, and reviewed via appeal by the City Council, had a (street) façade width at 82'-10", that follows the site's wide street frontage because it is limited by the property's shallow depth.
 - To further reduce the perceived mass and scale of the new dwelling from Corona Drive, an additional 12'-4" (former living room of approximately 221 square-feet) has been eliminated from the first level at the southernmost portion of the building, since the Board's approval.
 - Since the project's initial design, the building's street facing façade width has been narrowed a total of 15'- 8" (initial design 86'-2"; current design 70'-6").
- 2. Increase the setback at the street level by one foot, and the second floor by an additional one foot.**
 - The first level of building has been set back an additional foot from the street front property line from 15-feet to 16-feet. The second floor has been set back from 17'-6" to 18'-6".
- 3. Revise the color palette of the proposed home with natural colors that blend with hillside use such as beige and brown colors.**
 - The color palette of the previous designed included light grey and light brown painted smooth stucco, IPE rainscreen siding, dark grey metal roof and stainless steel railings. The quality and material colors for the building are proposed to largely be the same; however, the grey painted stucco is revised with a more natural color to blend into the hillside (beige/brown).

4. Change the finish of the garage door from the acrylic look to a wood-like finish.

- The preceding garage design included a black anodized aluminum sectional two-car garage door and has been revised with a two-car garage door with a wood-like finish.

5. As a condition of the environmental approval, require a performance bond for the grading to ensure completion of the grading.

- Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the City's Building & Safety Division shall require a performance bond ensuring completion of the project's grading.

Based on the above analysis, staff recommends **approval** of the project with **conditions**, as follow:

Conditions

1. In lieu of the hydroseed landscaping proposed at the southern portion of the lot, a mix of California-friendly groundcovers and shrubs shall be incorporated with the landscaped design.
2. That prior to issuance of a grading permit, a performance bond to the Satisfaction of the City's Building & Safety Division is required to ensure completion of the project's grading.

Attachments

1. Current Plans
2. Appeal Staff Report to City Council and Motion to Remand to DRB (PDR 1621615-B)
3. Previous Plans (provided to the DRB on May 28, 2020 and City Council, December 8, 2020)
4. Photos of Existing Property
5. Location Map
6. Neighborhood Survey and Photos of Surrounding Properties
7. Environmental Documents
8. Geotechnical Investigation (prepared by AES, dated April 1, 2019)
9. Vibration Memorandum (prepared by Meridian Consultants, LLC., dated October 28, 2020)
10. Geotechnical Investigation (prepared by AES, dated April 1, 2019)
11. Public Comment(s)