

Takeda, Michi

From: Barbara Miller [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 19, 2022 4:19 PM
To: Takeda, Michi
Subject: 1507 Oakdale Street

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To Members of the Historic Preservation Commission c/o Michi Takeda

I appreciate this opportunity to comment on the project at 1507 Oakdale Street. It has special meaning to me. I was one of the lead organizers in founding our Landmark District.

For the last 30 years while driving home on Oakdale, I have always admired 1507 as one of the most charming houses in our Landmark District, It has a simple integrity and elegance that is inexplicably compelling.

I was so relieved to hear that Susan Masterman's firm is in charge of this project and looked forward to seeing the design proposal.

I have reviewed the plans and the staff report. I wish I could endorse the project as an exciting new addition to the Rose Villa Oakdale Landmark District. My initial gut reaction to the front elevation was that it looked like 2 houses on a lot: one on top of the other.

I appreciate that the proposed second story addition can be set back from the front elevation. I like Staff's recommendation to eliminate the 2nd floor porch, thus gaining setback. However, even with conditions, I find it hard to envision adding a second story to this house, while preserving it's historic character (Standard 2, Secretary of the Interior). Even if the number and size of windows and slope of roofline is maintained in the 2nd story addition, it seems that the massing and scale of the proposed addition is out of character with the existing historic structure (8.2 Design Guidelines). 1507 Oakdale seems intrinsically designed as a one story home, with proportions to match. The project as proposed does not seem to meet all the objectives of the City of Pasadena, as noted in the Design Guidelines: Objective 7: Preserve the character and scale of Pasadena's established residential neighborhoods, Policy 7.1 Ensure that all new development in residential neighborhoods discourages mansionization.

Would the owners and architect consider designing an addition that goes back instead of up? It seems that the mature or protected trees are not in the backyard. This approach would preserve the historic character of the house, as seen from the street.

We had a recent project in our Landmark District at 370 S. Allen. The developer also added a second story to a 1920's Spanish style home built in 1928 (architect, Earl Gamble). It was non-contributing and already had a second story addition not in character with the original structure (proportions and siting).

This is not the case with the existing home at 1507 Oakdale. It is contributing and charming.

Sincerely,

Barbara Miller

