
Concerns regarding JB Pastor Building, DR 23-140

Ian Martin [REDACTED]

Tue, Jul 2, 2024 at 9:17 AM

To: mlepage@ci.carmel.ca.us, eallen@ci.carmel.ca.us, skarapetkov@ci.carmel.ca.us, rdelves@ci.carmel.ca.us, slocke@ci.carmel.ca.us

Cc: Chip Rerig <crerig@ci.carmel.ca.us>, Brandon Swanson <bswanson@ci.carmel.ca.us>, Evan Kort <ekort@ci.carmel.ca.us>, "Marnie R. Waffle" <mwaffle@ci.carmel.ca.us>, Katherine Wallace <kwallace@ci.carmel.ca.us>, planning@ci.carmel.ca.us, building@ci.carmel.ca.us

Dear Chairman LePage and Members of the Carmel-by-the-Sea Planning Commission,

I'm writing to you to express two concerns about the proposed design for the JB Pastor Building (DR 23-140).

First concern: It is too large to be built by law.

On the proposed plans, the structure labeled "building 1" and "building 3" is obviously not two separate buildings, but one single continuous building. The total floor area of it is 12,185 square feet, which greatly exceeds the legally allowed square footage for any one single structure, as per Carmel-by-the-Sea's municipal code:

17.14.140 Floor Area Ratio

C. Maximum Floor Area. No single structure shall contain more than 10,000 square feet of floor area.

This law was pointed out to the developer before when the planning commission considered an earlier iteration of the developer's Ulrika Plaza (DR 20-350) in 2022. Like now, the developer's plans for that project depicted a single proposed building that far exceeded the legal maximum square footage saying that it was multiple buildings when plainly it was one large one. The developer then redesigned so that none of the buildings on that site was larger than 10,000 square feet. As the October 12, 2022 staff report for the redesign of Ulrika Plaza states:

"At the previous hearing [March 9, 2022], there was also discussion regarding the size of the individual buildings and whether they exceeded the allowable square footage for a single building. In accordance with CMC 17.14.140.C, *No single structure shall contain more than 10,000 square feet of floor area. Interaccessibility between adjacent structures on one or more building sites by any means that allows passage between structures without first exiting to an open space area shall not be allowed if the resulting floor area contained within the combined structures would exceed 10,000 square feet of area. It was concluded the buildings did in fact exceed the allowable square footage and should reduce in square footage and/or redesigned to be separated.*" (Emphasis added.)

Like that earlier iteration of the Ulrika Plaza design, a major component of the proposed design for the JB Pastor Building greatly exceeds the legally allowed size, and therefore needs to be revised.

Second concern: Adding additional Spanish colonial revival buildings to the downtown undermines our community character.

The Spanish colonial revival style of architecture has become a cliché all over California, appearing in the form of shopping centers, hotels, and all sorts of other commercial buildings. We already have plenty of examples of it in Carmel. More should be strenuously avoided here lest our village begin to feel like “anywhere USA.” What’s more, having a blend of different architectural styles is important to our community character. Adding even more Spanish colonial revival buildings--especially large ones--threatens that balance.

Our best examples of the Spanish colonial revival buildings were built here in the 1920s when a fascination with California’s Spanish colonial history was peaking. So-called “Serra Pageants” were popular then, and Carmel residents were captivated by the fact that California was once part of the Spanish empire. That was then. Today, we know more about the legacy of Spanish colonization and what it meant to the people and the cultures that were here for millennia before the Spanish arrived to “save” them. What was intended as salvation actually resulted in the exact the opposite. Knowing what we know today, we should not romanticize that era further by creating more buildings with architecture inspired by it.

Something else to consider: Carmel-by-the-Sea’s history is largely reflected in its buildings, but every time another historical reproduction is added, that history is diluted. Buildings should reflect the era that they were built in. (For example, the Spanish colonial revival of the 1920s capture a time when our village and California in general was enthralled with California’s Spanish colonial history.) Historical styles should therefore be avoided. As the commercial design guidelines state: “New buildings should not imitate styles of the past, but strive to achieve compatibility with the old.” I urge the planning commission to protect the integrity of our historical architectural record and community character and reject the Spanish colonial revival style as well as other historical reproductions.

“Consciously or unconsciously we admire the things that are true to themselves and we do not want [mission] San Gabriel for a church, or a home, or a hotel--but in itself, as the expression of its own time and place and life, it is beautiful.” --Internationally celebrated architect Charles Sumner Greene, writing in Pasadena in 1905. Greene would later move to Carmel-by-the-Sea and would serve the community as one of its first planning commissioners.

Sincerely,

Ian Martin

JB Pastor Building is a single structure under law

Ian Martin [REDACTED]

Wed, Jul 3, 2024 at 3:08 PM

To: mlepage@ci.carmel.ca.us, eallen@ci.carmel.ca.us, skarapetkov@ci.carmel.ca.us, rdelves@ci.carmel.ca.us, slocke@ci.carmel.ca.us

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Dear Chairman LePage and Members of the Carmel-by-the-Sea Planning Commission,

The proposed JB Pastor Building (DR 23-140) is a *single structure* under the law as all of its parts are connected together.

The municipal code defines *structure* as follows:

A stable assembly of parts. The term "structure" includes, but is not limited to, any building, deck, garage, carport, arbor, fence, wall, stairway, road, pipe, flume, conduit, siphon, aqueduct, telephone line, and electrical power transmission and distribution line.

The total floor area of the current plans (June 10, 2024 submittal) is 12,807 square feet. That's 2,807 square feet too big according to municipal code: 17.14.140, C. *No single structure shall contain more than 10,000 square feet of floor area.*

Therefore, the proposed JB Pastor Building must be reduced in size to be compliant with the law.*

Thank you for your attention,

Ian Martin

*Keeping buildings small is the clear intention of the General Plan. See "Scale" on page 1-7 of the Land Use and Community Character Element for elaboration.

Mayor Potter, Members of the Carmel-by-the-Sea City Council and Planning Commission
City Hall
Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, 93921

July 1, 2024

RE: ESPERANZA CARMEL/JB PASTOR BUILDING (DR 23-140, E/S Dolores, South of Seventh Avenue)

Dear Mayor Potter, Council Members and Planning Commissioners,

The proposed JB Pastor Building (DR 23-140) near the corner of 7th and Dolores is *not* exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea represents. Rather, it requires a comprehensive, complete and thorough environmental assessment. Therefore, we respectfully insist that the planning commission hearing, currently scheduled for July 10, be postponed until this thorough environmental assessment is undertaken and resulting design revisions are made.

The story poles that were installed this morning for the proposed design, demonstrate an alarming disregard for the integrity of our family's building, known as Reimers' Stonehouse Terrace, which we anticipate will be included in Carmel-by-the-Sea's historic resources inventory once it reaches 50 years of age in two years' time. Our building, located on San Carlos between 7th and 8th, was designed by celebrated California architect and Carmel-by-the-Sea community leader Olof Dahlstrand, who expertly responded to and relied on the bank building's sculptural, detached form when designing the massing and views of our project. Dahlstrand is profiled in Carmel-by-the-Sea's historic context statement and mentioned therein no fewer than 16 times.

Furthermore, these story poles show that the proposed development will impact not only our building by literally walling off our west-facing light and views, but also, a building that is currently a recognized historic resource. That is, of course, the Seventh and Dolores Building. Not only is environmental review essential to protect two historically significant downtown buildings, it's also what the law requires:

The proposed development meets the definition of a "project" per the Carmel-by-the-Sea Municipal Code. The proposal will impact a historic resource.
The proposal will impact an adjacent historic resource.

CEQA defines a "project" as: an activity which may cause either direct physical change to the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. (Sec.21065)

CEQA further states a project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource and thus, is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. Historic resources "included in a local register of historic resources...OR deemed significant pursuant to criteria set forth (herein) are PRESUMED to be historically culturally significant for purposes of this section, unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the resource is not historically or culturally significant. (Sec. 21084.1)

The historic significance of the land proposed for the JB Pastor Building, as well as the adjacent Seventh/Dolores property and structure, has long been acknowledged as having historic stature. Given the prominence of Olof Dahlstrand in Carmel-by-the-Sea's historic context statement, Reimers' Stonehouse Terrace most definitely *should* be presumed historic under CEQA, as described above.

The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea has incorporated the State CEQA into the Municipal Code---Section 17.60.020.

CEQA addresses the physical adjacency of proposed projects to historic resources. A project in the immediate vicinity of a historic resource that alters its significance is a "project" that has a significant impact on that resource. (Sec. 15064.5 (b)(1))


The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea Municipal Code states "The purpose of this chapter is to provide the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, project applicants, and the public with the procedures to be used in administering the City's responsibilities under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), codified as Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.," (CMC Sec. 17.60.010)

CEQA and the Municipal Code, singularly and in tandem, require a thorough assessment of a project's direct and indirect impacts on the environment, including buildings, structures, and sites of historic significance. Moreover, this assessment is required for City consideration and public review before the City decides whether to permit the project. The public has a right to know and provide input on:

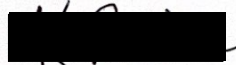
- the applicant's proposed project
- a thorough environmental assessment of the project's impacts, and
- identification of mitigation measures to minimize or avoid significant adverse impacts.

We respectfully insist that the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea require a thorough environmental assessment of the JB Pastor proposal, in accordance with CEQA and the City's Municipal Code, so that this municipality, all responsible agencies, and the public have, in totality, the information on which to judge this project. That information, a thorough environmental assessment, would inform the City's decision making whether to approve the project and, if so, under what conditions.

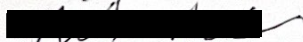
Sincerely,



Nora Reimers



Kristi Reimers



Niels Reimers



Janet Reimers

/s/ Niels III Reimers
/s/ Holly Reimers
/s/ John Reimers
/s/ Sarah Reimers
/s/ Kari Parsons
/s/ Craig Parsons

cc
Chip Rerig
Brandon Swanson
Brian Pierik