



MEMORANDUM

TO: ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

FROM: ANDREW PEREZ, ACTING PLANNING MANAGER

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
AGENDA ITEM 8.B – FEBRUARY 7, 2022 ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
COMMITTEE MEETING
REVIEW OF ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS ASSOCIATED CONDITIONAL
USE PERMIT 21-005; CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW COMMERCIAL
BUILDING AND ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ART GALLERY AND WINE
TASTING COLLECTIVE; LOCATION – 211 E. BRANCH ST.;
APPLICANT –ERIC AND GILLIAN VON BERG; REPRESENTATIVE –
JENNIFER MARTIN, JENNIFER MARTIN ARCHITECTURE AND
DESIGN

DATE: FEBRUARY 7, 2022

Attached are public comment letters received for the above referenced item after the publication of the agenda.

cc: Assistant City Manager
 Community Development Director
 City Website

To the Architectural Review Committee,

The attempt to modify the modern looking building at 211 E. Branch Street is appreciated but it really needs to conform to our village so it doesn't stand out like a sore thumb. If modern buildings start popping up all over like the ones entering our village blocking the old Methodist Church, we lose the uniqueness that everyone enjoys. Most towns are so boring and generic. Let's keep our town special. The new building needs to blend in with the town.

Please be firm and maintain standards we have set for the village of Arroyo Grande.

Blessings,

Karen Talley Miller

I'm having trouble finding a way to contact members of the ARC. I want to request that they follow the rules City Council passed a long, long time ago that forbids "modern" looking buildings in the Village. In the same way that they forbade 'chain' restaurants to go in. The Village is a special place and its architectural value must be protected. We already have too many exceptions to the rules that snuck in.

If we aren't vigilant, we could end up with a 'Village' that looks like a modern version of a plan that is in our Archives: a detailed drawing that shows Branch Street looking like a modern mid-70's construction of steel and glass. They hoped to level everything and make it up-to-date. It didn't happen, but it still could. The newest Branch St project is another try. Don't let it happen.

Jan Scott, Curator
South County Historical Society
& AG resident

To the members of the ARC.

I am a lifelong resident of Arroyo Grande. My great grandparents came to Arroyo Grande in 1875. The pride of Arroyo Grande has always been the Village and the way it has been preserved to honor our past.

I am pleased that the house at 211 East Branch Street will not be changed and will stay consistent with the rules set for the Village. Please also keep the new building consistent with the Village rules. A modern building on Branch street would just not fit. Not only will the large building overpower the beautiful house, but the strange windows, plus it seems everything on the building is randomly placed and not in keeping with the aesthetic of the other Village buildings.

Rules are in place that others have followed, please enforce these same rules now and not approve the building as currently drawn.

Thank you,
Judy Pinkston

Dear Council members,

Keep Arroyo Grande historic, that is her charm. All new buildings should fit in to the Historic tone of the Village.

Pete Kelley

To the City:

The parking structure on Palm Street in San Luis Obispo is beautiful. It wasn't always so. It became immediately beautiful once the Hotel San Luis Obispo, just across the street, was completed. The hotel, which resembles steel-and-glass versions of Lego blocks faced by 1940 Ford radiator grills and/or San Quentin cell blocks, made the parking structure beautiful because its fundamental awfulness is such a stark contrast to the parking structure's respect for Palm Street's heritage.

I have always believed that Arroyo Grande had adopted a similar ethic--respect for my hometown's heritage--in planning new construction for Branch Street. But the revised plans for 211 East Branch are totally out of character for a street with such a rich past. The drawings, in fact, remind me a little of the Hotel San Luis Obispo.

I had the great fortune to take my AGHS students to Paris twice, including to Notre Dame. When the great cathedral tragically burned, I was appalled when some people had this reaction: *"It's only a building."*

I thought of the centuries of workers--stonemasons and carpenters, roofers and stained-glass artists and the sculptors of the cathedral's saints--who invested their lives in what was "only a building." I thought, too, of the millions of votive candles lit by centuries of Parisians in fear or mourning or thanksgiving.

Notre Dame's fire was a tragedy because a building *isn't* just a building: it represents a city and its people. Notre Dame was a visual summary of generations of Parisians and their lives.

Arroyo Grande is 5,000 miles from Paris, and I'm not suggesting we plan a Gothic cathedral next to Rooster Creek. But I am suggesting that we invite the good people who plan to develop 211 East Branch to do so with respect to a street that, to me, is still alive with the people who have walked it for a century and a half.

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/aa048dde/HGIpkNPpJkKkWXOD7K1MQg?u=https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yJEkZagpl9m4R3TB61rbkLoLLDSHTOdJ/view?usp=sharing>

My best wishes,

Jim Gregory

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/abb570dc/DmsLBwww1Uyo2fvn3CMEbg?u=http://www.arroyograndehistory.com/>

February 6, 2022

To the members of the ARC,

I am heartened that the city has made a few suggestions towards meeting the Guidelines & Standards in a historic district. Some of the suggestions cannot be fairly judged because of the lack of available details.

There are no measurements or details of the pergola, that I can find, bad eyesight. In the G&S, there is a standard, not a guideline, that addresses trellis, rails, fencing. "...elements of the building shall neither overpower or detract from the visual continuity of the streetscape..." With the photo provided, the ground floor pergola starts at the end of the house, and is at least as tall as the telephone pole in the upper right-hand corner. The slightly skewed renderings seem to show that the new building is farther back than the plans present. And some drawings show the second story as not much taller than the house. Because the new building is 10 to 15 feet taller than its immediate neighbors, the roof/pergola will be visible from the street, especially from the east and west sides. The pediments, that are similar to Rooster Creek, would need to be very tall, or the pergola will compete with the pediments. The eye will naturally be drawn to the elements in conflict.

Exterior materials.

The ideal exterior material would be wide hardie-backer ship lap siding, the horizontal lines would unite the build/house.

The stucco should be one color, gray/blues family. Most of the buildings on Branch Street have one exterior material with a secondary material that is mainly used on the functional parts of a building; framing or trimming doors, windows, and decorative elements. They are not any buildings within the historic district that have randomly placed windows and doors, or large area of random brick without a function. One of the buildings with a large area of secondary material, is the old B of A building, on the corner of Branch and Nevada, which has a wide frame of brick around the front door, questionable attractiveness, but balanced on both sides of the door. To break up a large expanse of stucco, refer to the buildings on Branch Street. Example: the large indentations on the three brick storefronts, Farrell Smyth, Heritage, and restaurant. Evenly spaced windows and decorative cornices could be employed. A used brick, 3 ft. wainscot would complement the brick work of the house. The stucco exterior does take guidance from the plaster, brick, rock buildings along Branch Street. However, there should be a relationship between the building and the house directly in front of it. Example: Rooster Creek complements the Conrad house next door. That portion of Rooster Creek has painted wood, and it is stepped back enough, to be more in proportion with the house, than the rest of Rooster Creek.

Doors and Windows.

Windows should be of the same size and evenly spaced with trim to refer to the vintage house. Seven types of windows, 4 types of doors randomly placed, do not meet the G & S.

The variety of false front facades (attached), resemble many of the buildings along Branch Street. Please note: The drawings and the local buildings all have simple, clean lines, with doors and windows evenly spaced and balanced. The rhythm of the buildings is symmetry, balance, and simple lines. Ornamentation adds the interest, dimension, and character to the individual building. Examples: pediments, parapets, cornices, balconies, overhangs and more...

I am foursquare behind the city's recommendation of adding pediments at the top of the front of the building. But the suggestions made by the city are only a half measure of what is needed to meet the G & S. If built as proposed including the changes by the city, the result would be a mostly modern building with a few elements added to technically satisfy the G & S. I don't think that a changing a few elements meets the spirit or letter of the G & S that the city has adopted at great expense over many years.

Also, consider that if this building falls short of meeting the G & S, it will set a precedence for other new constructions or remodels in the historic district, who will want to have the same half measures.

I suggest a continuance of the project, and that more detail and renderings be provided:

Trellis

Windows

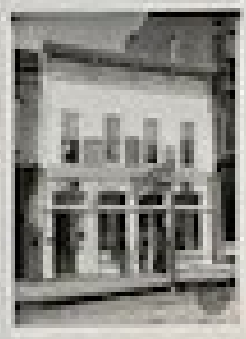
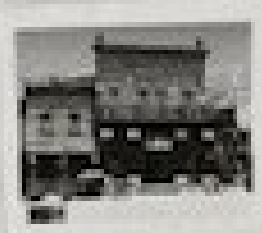
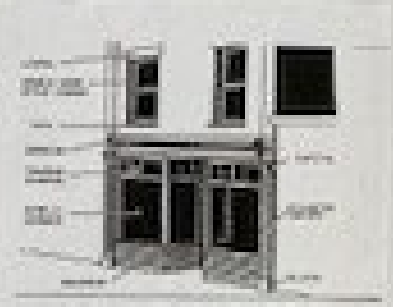
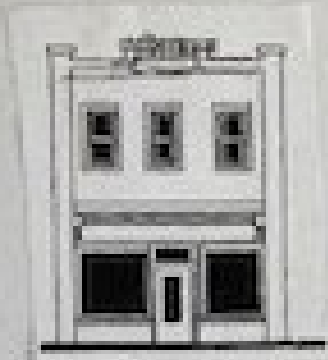
Pediments

Entrance/door

Wainscot

Thank you, for reading and considering my concerns.

Shirley Gibson





Hi, my name is Judy Cecchetti I have lived in Arroyo Grande all my life while I think an Art Gallery is a wonderful addition to our beautiful town, I have looked over the drawings of the building that have been submitted. They may be nice for another city but I do not think they would blend in with the buildings that already exist. Our little town has some very old buildings that have been lovingly taken care of.

Please consider a different design.

Thank you from a long time family member of this town.

Judy Cecchetti

Sorry this is late

To the members of the ARC:

I am writing to ask you to please take into consideration the following when reviewing the application for the new building at 211 Branch Street.

1. The building must keep with the character of the other buildings on Branch Street. A new modern building put in behind a beautiful old home would destroy the characteristics that make the village quaint and unique and a place that residents and visitors enjoy for that very reason.

2. We do not want Arroyo Grande to turn into just another city where you know what the buildings look like before you even get there. Tourists love to travel to towns that maintain their character and charm and once you start mixing the modern look among the historical facades you lose all that makes Arroyo Grande such a place.

Please take all this into consideration and keep Arroyo Grande special and make the new building compliment the old home and maintain the historical character and charm Arroyo Grande is known for.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Austin, Oceano resident
lifelong south county resident
family ties to the city of Arroyo Grande date back to 1904.

