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JUST CHILLIN'  
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# Santa Monica Daily Press

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE HANGING AND BANGING ISSUE

## Controversial project appealed

### Neighbors rally against construction plan in Third Street District

BY MELODY HANATANI  
Daily Press Staff Writer

OCEAN PARK A group of long-time residents and preservationists have filed an appeal to a new residential construction

project in the heart of the Third Street Historic District, the latest chapter in a saga that has seen neighbors pitted against neighbors in this normally quiet community.

The appeal to the proposal at 2642 Second St. was filed on Dec. 20 in response to a Landmarks Commission decision about 10 days prior that gave property owners Mark Gorman and Beth Burns the green light to erect a two-story home that neighbors have called "modernist."

The appeal moves on to the City Council which could hold a hearing on

the issue sometime this month.

Appeals to projects can be filed within 10 days of a Landmarks Commission decision, keeping building permits from being issued until the matter is resolved, according to Roxanne Tanemori, the planning associate liaison to the Landmarks Commission.

The appellants — Tony Haig, who owns a Victorian on Beach Street, Scott Campbell, who owns the so-called craftsman "airport" bungalow off Ocean Park Boulevard, and Bea Nemlaha, who owns a

bungalow on Third Street — contend that the design of the proposed house does not keep with the spirit of the historic district and violates its guidelines.

"The historic guidelines are not being applied," Nemlaha said. "As a result, projects are now being approved which are neither harmonious nor compatible with the character of the district."

The City Council established the historic district in 1990, one of two such designated

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### FESTIVITIES

# IN FULL BLOOM

Local group takes part in Tournament of Roses Parade

PHOTO ESSAY BY BRANDON WISE

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Brandon Wise [brandonw@smdp.com](mailto:brandonw@smdp.com)

LOCAL FLAVOR: This year the Kiwanis International youth group's Rose Parade float's theme was 'Serving Children Worldwide' and was designed by Michelle Lofthouse. Members of the Santa Monica Kiwanis club helped in putting the float together. The float depicted storybook characters on a ship with travelers from across the oceans in costume.



Brandon Wise [brandonw@smdp.com](mailto:brandonw@smdp.com)

FRESH FACE: Kevin Herrera, the new editor in chief of the Santa Monica Daily Press, takes a break from reading his favorite newspaper to smile for the camera.

## Daily Press heads in a new direction

### Kevin Herrera named new editor in chief of publication

BY MELODY HANATANI | Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN The end of one era signals the beginning of another.

So begins Kevin Herrera's tenure as the new editor of the Santa Monica Daily Press, the long-time reporter taking over as head of the city's only daily newspaper on Jan. 1 and replacing former editor, Michael Tittinger.

Herrera joined the Santa Monica Daily Press in January 2006, hired by former editor Carolyn Sackariason as a staff writer, covering virtually every inch of the city until October of that year when he was pro-

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File photo

**SITE OF THE DISPUTE:** The Landmarks Commission recently approved of a couple's plans to demolish this existing one-story duplex at 2642 Second St., in Ocean Park, in favor of erecting a new home that some opposing neighbors have called 'modernist.'

# Local residents appeal decision

FROM APPEAL PAGE 1

areas in Santa Monica, the other being the Bay Craftsman Cluster Historic District in Ocean Park. The Third Street Historic District includes more than 40 historic homes that contribute to the district, including two churches and a former church that was converted into a private residence.

The existing duplex on the Gorman-Burns property is considered to be a non-contributing feature to the district, giving the homeowners a bit more flexibility than if they were renovating a contributing structure.

The couple seemed surprised by the appeal.

"We've shown respect and care to the neighbors throughout this process," they said in a statement on Monday. "We made myriad changes to the design and its height, roofline, shape, materials, square footage over the last seven months, at significant cost."

They added that there are actually more property owners and residents in the district that support it than not.

Opponents say they fear that the integrity of the district is being compromised and the guidelines are being disrespected by both the homeowners and the Landmarks Commission in granting the project to move forward. The couple's project coincides with a more controversial project at 2617 Third St., where the owner of a bungalow is proposing to move his front house forward in order to expand on the back house.

"The people in the district feel it is important the guidelines for the district be upheld," said Karen Blechman, who lives on Third Street. "As with the other project on Third Street, this project on Second Street in many significant ways didn't conform to the guidelines and therefore when the Landmarks Commission approved it, it was setting a

very unfortunate precedent."

Most of the commissioners at the Dec. 10 meeting seemed supportive of the project, expressing their appreciation for the changes the homeowners made in the design, changes suggested at previous commission hearings. The project was approved with the contingency that the color of the house change from a bright white to a softer hue.

Neighbors that oppose the project believe that the design is far too contemporary and refute the homeowners' assessment that the architecture of the proposed house borrows defining elements from nearby historic homes in the district.

"A contemporary building cannot and will not maintain or enhance the turn of the century character of this old beach neighborhood," according to a statement in the appeal.

The neighbors had already planned for an appeal even before the Landmarks Commission decision was made last month and Nemlaha suggested another could be filed if the Third Street project is also approved by the commission on Jan. 14.

Though he has yet to take an official stance on the issue, Mayor Herb Katz said on Wednesday that he believes that if the project is on a non-contributing site and is not a monstrosity, he would be inclined to throw his support behind it.

To Katz, who is an architect, change is part of how a historic district grows.

"My feeling is a lot of times these districts don't want you to do anything 'new' that is contemporary ... but that is how you grow and that is how you change," Katz said. "(The project) needs to be in context in terms of size and in context with the neighborhood, but I am not one to say just because it's contemporary, it doesn't fit."

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