



OC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT

DATE: August 21, 2025

TO: Orange County Zoning Administrator

FROM: OC Development Services/Planning Division

SUBJECT: Public Hearing on Planning Application PA24-0185 for a Coastal Development Permit.

PROPOSAL: The applicant is requesting a Coastal Development Permit to demolish the existing house and construct a new 4,585 square feet two-story residence with attached garage.

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: 1B "Suburban Residential"

ZONING: R1 "Single Family Residence," with a CD "Coastal Development" Overlay and SR "Sign Restrictions" Overlay

LOCATION: The project is located in the community of Emerald Bay at 131 Emerald Bay, Laguna Beach, CA 92651 (APN 053-040-02) within the Fifth Supervisorial District

APPLICANT: James Jaeger, Property Owner
Christopher Brandon, Applicant

STAFF CONTACT: Ilene Lundfelt, Associate Planner
Phone: (714) 667-9796 Email: Ilene.Lundfelt@ocpw.ocgov.com

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

OC Development Services/Planning Division recommends the Zoning Administrator:

1. Receive staff report and public testimony as appropriate; and,
2. Find that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Class 2 (Replacement or Reconstruction) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15302; and
3. Approve Planning Application PA24-0185 for a Coastal Development Permit subject to the attached Findings (Attachment 1) and Conditions of Approval (Attachment 2).

BACKGROUND AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

The subject site is located at 131 Emerald Bay, Laguna Beach, California, on Lot 36 of Tract No. 975. It is zoned R1(CD)(SR) – Single Family Residence with a CD (Coastal Development) Overlay and an SR (Sign Restrictions) Overlay. The property is approximately 6,732 square feet, with an average width of 120 feet and an average depth of 53 feet. It is situated approximately 154 feet south of Pacific Coast Highway within the Emerald Bay community. The site is currently developed with a 3,391-square-foot two story house as shown on Site Photos (Attachment 3).

The project site has two approved variances on the property. Variance V-3972 was approved by the County of Orange Planning Commission on January 7, 1960, to reduce the rear yard setback to 10.67 feet. Variance V-6114 was approved by the Orange County Area Variance Committee on July 16, 1964, to further reduce the rear yard setback to 10 feet. Under this planning application, the front of the property was determined to be Emerald Bay, and the side was designated as Emerald Crest Drive.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project involves demolishing the existing 3,391-square-foot house and constructing a new two-story residence. The new home will include 4,585 square feet of livable space, an attached 500-square-foot garage, and a 370-square-foot deck as shown on the Plans (Attachment 4) and Applicant’s Letter (Attachment 5).

SURROUNDING LAND USE

The project site is a residential use and is surrounded by existing residential uses. The zoning and existing land use for surrounding properties is as follows:

Direction	Zoning District	Existing Land Use
Project Site	“Single-Family Residence” (R1)(CD)(SR)	Single-Family Dwelling
North	“Single-Family Residence” (R1)(CD)(SR)	Single-Family Dwelling
South	“Single-Family Residence” (R1)(CD)(SR)	Single-Family Dwelling
East	“Single-Family Residence” (R1)(CD)(SR)	Single-Family Dwelling
West	City of Laguna Beach – R1 Zoning District	Single-Family Dwelling

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Below is a table comparing the development standards for “Single-Family Residence” District with the proposed project:

**Project Comparison with R1 “Single-Family Residence” District
Site Development Standards**

STANDARD	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
Building Site Area	7,200 square feet	6,732 square feet (existing)
Maximum Building Height	35 feet maximum	28 feet (proposed)
Structural Front Setback	20 feet	20 feet (proposed)
Structural Side Setback	5 feet minimum	5 feet right side (proposed) 5 feet left side (proposed)
Structural Rear Setback	10 feet per V-6114	33 feet(proposed)
Walls and Gates in Setback	6 feet side and rear setback	6'-0" maximum height in the side and rear (proposed)

Within the Coastal Development Overlay zone, and specifically within the Emerald Bay Local Coastal Program (LCP), the demolition and construction of a new residence requires the approval of a Coastal Development Permit (Zoning Code Sections 7-9-40 and Emerald Bay LCP). The proposed project conforms to the goals and objectives of the Emerald Bay LCP through its design and the application of standard conditions of approval, included within Attachment 2. The project is consistent with the approved intensity of development, as well as the applicable Land Use Policies contained in LCP Section E regarding resources Management - Watershed, Environmental Hazards – Geologic and Fire Hazard.

REFERRAL FOR COMMENT AND PUBLIC NOTICE

A copy of the planning application and the proposed site plan were distributed for review and comment to appropriate County divisions – Building and Safety, Traffic, Civil Engineering and Geotechnical Division. Staff has reviewed all comments received, and where appropriate, has addressed the comments through recommended Conditions of Approval, which are provided as Attachment 2. Public notices were mailed to all owners of record within 300 feet of the subject property, posted at the project site, published in a local newspaper, and posted at the posting kiosk at the County Administration buildings located in Santa Ana, at least ten days prior to this public hearing, as required by established public hearing posting procedures. As of the writing of this staff report, no comments raising issues with the project have been received from OCFA or other County divisions.

As required by the Emerald Bay LCP, the project was referred to the Emerald Bay Community Association (EBCA) for review and comment. The EBCA approved the project at their meeting on April 29, 2025 (Attachment 6).

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The proposed project is Categorically Exempt (Class 2) from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15302, because it provides for the replacement or reconstruction of an existing structure where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

CONCLUSION

Staff has reviewed the applicant's request for a Coastal Development Permit and found the proposed project to be compliant with the Emerald Bay LCP. The project is an allowed Principal Permitted Use in the R1 "Single-Family Residence" District and has been found to be compatible with adjacent residential uses, including similar previous approvals. Staff supports approval of the project subject to the attached Findings (Attachment 1) and Conditions of Approval (Attachment 2).

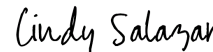
Submitted by:

Concurred by:

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Ilene Lundfelt, Associate Planner
OC Development Services/Planning

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Cindy Salazar, Division Manager
OC Development Services/Planning

ATTACHMENTS

1. Recommended Findings
2. Recommended Conditions of Approval
3. Site Photos
4. Architectural Plans
5. Applicant's Letter
6. EBCA Board Minutes dated April 29, 2025

APPEAL PROCEDURE

Any interested person may appeal the decision of the Zoning Administrator on this permit to the OC Planning Commission within 15 calendar days of the decision upon submittal of required documents filed online at myoceservices.ocgov.com or in person at the County Service Center, located at 601 N. Ross St., Santa Ana. If you challenge the action taken on this proposal in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this report, or in written correspondence delivered to OC Development Services.