

CORAL GABLES MERRICK HOUSE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Regular Meeting Minutes of September 15, 2008
Coral Gables Merrick House
907 Coral Way, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

MEMBERS	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	COMMISSIONERS
Barbara Reese	P	A	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	-	P	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II
Margaret Steele	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	-	P	P	Vice-Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Jany Marchena	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	-	P	P	Comm. Maria Anderson
Olga Baquero-Lima	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	E	P	Comm. Rafael “Ralph” Cabrera, Jr.
Laura Yusko	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	P	Comm. Wayne “Chip” Withers
Marie Vacca	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	P	Board Appointee
Sondra Space	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	-	P	P	City Manager

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Kara Kautz, Historic Preservation Officer

A = Absent

E = Excused

P = Present

*** = Special Meeting**

- = No Meeting

^ = New Member

+ = Resigned

GUESTS: Susannah Worth, historic textile consultant; Michelle Reeves, Robinson & Reeves, framing expert.

RECORDING SECRETARY: Nancy C. Morgan, Coral Gables Services, Inc.

Chair Yusko called the meeting to order at 8:50 a.m.

Minutes of the Board Meeting of August 4, 2008:

Ms. Space made a motion to approve the August 4, 2008 meeting minutes. The motion was approved.

Election of Board Chair and Vice Chair:

For the purpose of continuity, Ms. Baquero-Lima nominated Laura Yusko as Board Chair and Marie Vacca as Board Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded and unanimously approved.

Personal Appearances – Susannah Worth and Michelle Reeves:

Ms. Worth distributed a draft of a textiles furnishing plan for the Merrick House, explaining that she sought Board input before finalizing her recommendations. She described research conducted throughout the House and comprehensively discussed each room, its design, colors, styles and furnishings, along with her recommendations for replacement or repair within each. Ms. Worth displayed fabrics, discussed establishing a protracted timeline for replacement to accommodate budgets, made suggestions about color options and styles, and engaged in substantive discussion during her presentation.

Board members agreed that each room would need to be listed in priority order for refurbishment of the textile furnishings. Fabrics, colors, styles and paint colors were discussed. Ms. Worth loaned a 1920s book on residential interiors to Ms. Kautz, who agreed to make color copies of various portions for Board review.

Regarding the second floor bathroom, Ms. Worth suggested paint analyst, Frank Welsh, to determine the age of the paint chips, and suggested researching towels and bath rugs for the period.

Ms. Reeves, recommended to staff by the conservator of the Solomon Merrick painting, described her background, experience with historical framed artwork, philosophy about framing, and her belief in retaining original frames as often as possible. After touring the House to inspect all framed pieces, she expressed concern about those framed behind glass, explaining that they captured and retained mold which would eventually destroy the piece.

Ms. Reeves agreed to research the painting created by Althea Merrick of Solomon Merrick. When research is complete, she will bring samples and her recommendations to an upcoming Board meeting. She strongly suggested documenting any and all changes made, including new fabrics, framing, painting and other applications.

House Report:

Ms. Kautz provided the following report:

- Total visitor attendance for August: 14
- Liliana Andreu is on docent recess. In an effort to recruit new docents, Ms. Kautz drafted a letter to the Villagers and Junior League that will be mailed soon. One docent suggested hosting an informal tea to attract prospective docents. Ms. Kautz will put an announcement about the tea in the Herald's Neighbors section.
- Trust Fund balance: \$44,347.15
- House rental: AIA Miami will meet at the House for the second time on the evening of September 18.
- Regarding second floor refinishing, additional quotes are being sought.

- Regarding the coral rock wall, Ms. Kautz is seeking additional photographs for the contractors to clarify the rock appearance.
- Regarding exterior signage, one quote has been obtained thus far; however, Ms. Kautz said she was not entirely comfortable with the description in the quote and is seeking more information. The estimate for one sign in front and the parking signage in the back is \$3,570.59. It is unclear if it includes installation or a pole. She also contacted the contractor who provided an estimate in 2004 and they expressed interest in updating the quote.
- Regarding design of the House brochure, verbal quotes were received from Vortex, Tom Grabowski & Associates and Goosepen. It was suggested that printing of the brochure might be donated by a printer. The anticipated cost of brochure design is approximately \$3,000.

Ms. Space made a motion to approve the Goosepen proposal to prepare the brochure, which was seconded and passed unanimously.

- Regarding House use, Ms. Kautz reported no requests. The Pinewood Cemetery Board wants to hold a reception for Harriet Liles at the House. More information will be provided at the next meeting.
- Ms. Kautz distributed a proposed donation policy and will also transmit it electronically.

Old Business:

Docent recognition will take place at an upcoming City Commission meeting.

Ms. Reese reported that the Coral Gables Garden Club has requested to conduct a plant sale outside the House on Sunday, December 2, and discussed the possibility of also conducting House tours for a small fee during the event. The Garden Club also requested putting a doll house on display inside the House. The Board agreed to approve the request and will set tour times.

The status of the House refrigerator and the donation policy will be discussed at the next meeting.

New Business:

Ms. Kautz reported that Coral Gables television wants to cover a walk-through of the House for the Golden Gables and she recommended that Laura Yusko be the spokesperson. This will be done the week of October 6th.

Committee Reports:

Events Committee:

After distributing a report about the Holiday Open House on Saturday, December 13 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., Ms. Baquero-Lima reviewed all details for the party, including House and table decorations, garden and verandah activities, features and entertainment, vendors, food, beverages, programming, invitations, publicity, volunteer needs, signs and budget (estimated at approximately \$3,200). Most recommendations were approved as presented, and many logistical details of the event were discussed. It was agreed that the Board will prepare the invitations themselves to conserve funds. Ms. Baquero-Lima will research publicity options further. Eight volunteers will be needed,

and Ms. Reese agreed to recruit them. The gifts from Santa to the children will be donated by Ms. Vacca and Ms. Baquero-Lima.

Decorations Committee:

Ms. Steele and Ms. Space will decorate the House for the Fall in mid-October.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 20, 2008, 8:45 a.m.

The following meeting will be held Monday, November 17, 2008 at 8:45 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara N. Kautz
Historic Preservation Officer