

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 19, 2009, 4:00 p.m.

City Commission Chambers

405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida

MEMBERS:	M	A	M	J	J	J#	A	S	O	N	D	J	F#	F	APPOINTED BY:
Dorothy Thomson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II
Margaret Rolando*											P	P	+	P**	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Ernesto Santos	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	A	E	Comm. Maria Anderson
Gonzalo Sanabria	P	E	E	P	E	P	E	P	P	P**	P	P	P	P	Comm. Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Dolly MacIntyre	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
Michael Beeman	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	^	Historic Preservation Board
Joyce Meyers	P	P	P	P	E	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	A	P	City Manager
Lisa Bennett	P	E	P	P	E	E	P	P	E	E	P	P	A	P	City Commission
Shirley Maroon	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	City Commission

** Mr. Sanabria arrived at 5:03 p.m.; Ms. Rolando arrived at 4:15 p.m.

+ Ms. Rolando recused herself from discussion.

STAFF:

Kara Kautz, Historic Resources Officer

Betty Perez, Administrative Assistant

A = Absent

P = Present

E = Excused

*** = New Member**

^ = Resigned Member

= Special Meeting

GUESTS: Margaret Davis, Wayne Donathan, Howard Gregg, John R. Forbes, Frank Faragalli, Scott Matheny, Maggie Tawil, Alan Krischer, Esther Zabalo, Charles Girtman, Antoinette Price, Edwina Prime, Elizabeth Andrews, Kelly and June Marcum, Rolando Hidalgo, Javier Puig, Seth Stopek, Joanne Matthews, Lydia Salas, Glenn Pratt, Marshall Bellin, Tim and Marlene Rush, Sergio Pino, Venny Torre, Mort Guilford, Leona F. Cooper, Douglas Zargham, Sameer Majeed, George Volsky, Harvey Benefield, Jillian Matthews

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

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dolly MacIntyre at 4:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT and DISCLOSURE OF CONTEXT:

Ms. MacIntyre read for the record the statement regarding lobbyist registration and disclosure. She then stated that if any members of the board had any ex parte communication or contact regarding any cases being heard, it was necessary to disclose such communication or contact. Board members did not indicate that any such communication occurred.

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Ms. Thomson made a motion to excuse the absence of Mr. Santos. Ms. Meyers seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

Ms. MacIntyre announced that Mr. Beeman resigned due to health issues.

Mr. Sanabria made a motion to accept Mr. Beeman's resignation from Board service with regret. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

MINUTES: MEETING OF JANUARY 15, 2009:

Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 15, 2009. Ms. Meyers seconded the motion, unanimously approved by voice vote.

DEFERRALS: None.

SWEARING IN THE PUBLIC: Nancy Morgan swore in audience members who planned to testify during the meeting.

STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:

CASE FILE COA (ST) 2009-14

An application for the issuance of a Standard Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 2703 Alhambra Circle, a contributing property within the "Alhambra Circle Historic District," legally described as lots 17 and 18, Block 10, Coral Gables Section D, according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 25, Page 74, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the installation of a new roof using clay "S" tiles.

Stating the property was a contributing structure within a historic district, Ms. Kautz explained that the applicant proposed installing a Santa Fe Corporation Spanish S clay tile roof.

A representative (contractor) of Florida Roof Tech Corporation presented a letter from homeowner Kelly Marcum, read by Ms. MacIntyre. The letter urged Board approval of the requested tile. Thereafter, the contractor relayed their application process with the City, stating that the Board of Architects approved the Spanish S tile, but Historic Resources staff rejected it. Ms. Kautz said Board review was sought because a precedent had been set to replace original true barrel tile on historic structures with the same material.

Discussion comments:

- S tile should not be applied on any contributing structure in a historic district as it is inconsistent with the period of architecture.
- The contractor said that numerous roofs on Alhambra Circle had S tile. He presented a proposal to apply barrel tile to the first row of the roof for visual conformity and to use S tile thereafter.
- The first row of barrel tile might help mitigate the appearance.
- Ms. Kautz requested Board consultation with City Architect Carlos Mindreau regarding the Board of Architects rejection of the proposed tile.
- A drawing was requested of the proposed roof using the two types of tile to view the visual outcome.
- Generally, staff recommends replacing barrel tile with barrel tile on a historic home to maintain integrity.
- S tile did not exist when most historic houses were built.
- Ms. Thomson concurred with Ms. Rolando about needing visual confirmation of the proposed roof.
- The price of barrel tile would increase the owners' cost by \$7,000 to \$8,000 over the \$33,000 estimate.

- The contractor was asked to provide photographs of roofs installed as proposed and also to provide samples of the proposed tile at the March meeting.

Ms. MacIntyre invited members of the audience to speak to the application.

Homeowner Kelly Marcum said he lived in the house since 1971 and didn't intend to change the look of the roof. He selected S tile from the City's approved roof material list. He added that he was retired, on a fixed income in a difficult economy, and that the roof already had two leaks with the rainy season about to start. The roof was last replaced 20 years ago.

Ms. MacIntyre invited other audience members to speak. Hearing no requests, she closed the public hearing portion of this application.

Additional discussion:

- Ms. Bennett reiterated the importance of using barrel tile as one of the most distinctive characteristics of historic homes.
- Ms. Maroon termed the case a hardship and suggested approving barrel tile for the first row with S tile used for the remainder of the roof.
- It was noted that economic hardship documentation was not provided by the applicants.
- Differences between barrel tile and S tile during hurricane wind-force conditions were compared.

Ms. Maroon made a motion to approve roof replacement design using barrel tile on the border of the roof and Spanish 'S' tile on the remainder of the roof. Mr. Sanabria seconded the motion.

Mr. Sanabria asked if the hybrid tile application was acceptable to Building and Zoning. In the absence of clarification from the City Architect, Ms. Kautz said the indication from the roofers was that the application with the barrel border from U.S. Tile, was unapproved by the Building and Zoning Department; therefore, the hybrid proposal under discussion could not be approved as presented.

Since there was confusion about the appropriateness of the hybrid proposal, Ms. Meyers suggested that the Board approve the hybrid proposal as a reasonable compromise, and if the hybrid was rejected by Building and Zoning, the applicant could present another solution. The contractor agreed to this suggestion. Mr. Sanabria suggested continuance of the application for a month to allow the applicant to review options with Building officials and for Historical Resources staff to research issues with the City Architect. Mr. Marcum expressed concern about onset of the rainy season.

Ms. Maroon revised her motion to approve the Spanish 'S' tile without the barrel tile border. There was no second to the motion.

Ms. Meyers made a motion to approve the hybrid solution with a first row of true barrel tile followed by the S tile.

Another Florida Roof Tech contractor stated that the U.S. Tile would never be approved for this type of house by Building and Zoning, as the architect said the tile was not a good choice for this type of house. Ms. Meyers advised that the Board could overrule an architect, but not a building official's decision based on life safety issues.

Mr. Sanabria seconded Ms. Meyers' motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Meyers, Mr. Sanabria, Ms. Rolando, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: Ms. Thomson, Ms. Bennett, Ms. Maroon. The motion failed.

Ms. Maroon made a motion to approve the 'S' tile application for the entire roof. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Sanabria, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Maroon. Nays: Ms. Meyers, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Bennett, Ms. MacIntyre. The motion failed.

Ms. Kautz informed the applicants of their option to appeal to the City Commission, and they were advised to contact staff for guidance about the process. Ms. Meyers pointed out the option to find out from the City Architect why the hybrid was not acceptable and to bring that information back to the Board for clarification.

SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2009-01:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the traffic roundabout at the intersection of Segovia Circle and Coral Way, legally described as that portion of the right-of-way that lies at the intersection of Coral Way with Segovia Street and North Greenway Drive, in Coral Gables, Florida. The same also being between Blocks 9, 22 and Granada Golf Course, of the plat of Coral Gables Section "B," of Plat Book 5, at Page 111; and Blocks 2 and 3 of the plat of Coral Gables Biltmore Section, of Plat Book 20, at Page 28, both of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested design approval for the installation of landscaping in the traffic roundabout.

Ms. Kautz relayed the background of the roundabout, approved in 2003 by the Board on condition that the landscaping element be presented for Board approval. She described the landscaping design, adding that the Landscape Beautification Advisory Board did not approve the proposed design in January 2009 due to issues with power lines and the roundabout's shape. They requested design redevelopment that considered power lines and the oval nature of the area. Historical Resources staff recommended deferring until the Landscape Beautification Advisory Board indicated their satisfaction.

Mr. Delgado advised that this roundabout was the most successful traffic circle in the City, adding that the public was very supportive of it, and that Albert Perez, the landscape architect, was highly competent and sensitive to historic sites. Mr. Delgado recommended the landscaping proposal as presented. He said the landscaping did not detract from the surrounding monuments, that power lines were more than 50 feet high and easily cleared the height of the royal palms. From a traffic standpoint, the design addressed driver and bicyclist safety issues and met visibility requirements. If, in the future, the City decided to install a monument or fountain, there was sufficient room in the center. All water and electricity systems to support present and future needs were included. Mr. Delgado said that Public Works recommended approval of the design, and thereafter responded to clarifying questions about objections of the Landscape Beautification Advisory Board as well as various other aspects of the site.

Ms. MacIntyre invited audience members to speak to the application. There being no such requests, the public hearing portion of the application closed.

Ms. Maroon made a motion to approve the landscape design for the intersection of Segovia Street and Coral Way as proposed and presented. Ms. Meyers seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Sanabria, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Bennett, Ms. Maroon, Ms. Meyers, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2009-02:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the alteration of the intersection of Segovia Circle and Alhambra Circle, legally described as that portion of the right-of-way that lies at the intersection of Alhambra Circle with Segovia Street, in Coral Gables, Florida. The same also being between Blocks 20, 21, and 22, of the plat of Coral Gables Section "B," of Plat Book 5, at Page 111, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested design approval for the re-alignment of the intersection at Alhambra Circle and Segovia Circle.

Ms. Kautz conducted a presentation of the design to realign the intersection of Alhambra Circle and Segovia Street, stating the goal of the project to slow traffic. She explained that an alternative design, which included a sharper turn on Segovia Street and shifted the entrance to the median slightly to the east, was the preferred choice of the neighbors, but said a traffic engineer she consulted indicated either alternative would generate the same result and slow traffic. Ms. Kautz said staff believed the first design had the least amount of impact on the roadway, and advised that the Board should select one of the two designs.

Mr. Delgado explained that both options would provide more green area, with one design being more restrictive. He reviewed design details responded to clarifying questions.

Ms. MacIntyre invited public comment.

George Volsky, 1008 Alhambra Circle: Mr. Volsky said neighbors should have been consulted more about the change. He said the City contained areas more dangerous than this, and concluded that he was offended by the proposal.

Mr. Delgado advised that the project was advertised, posted, and that immediate neighbors approved the measure 100%. Mr. Volsky said he did not receive a letter, stated that the speed limit needed to be enforced and that Cadiz Avenue was very dangerous. Mr. Delgado explained the notification process and input provided by neighbors, and Ms. Kautz added that Special Certificates of Appropriateness did not require a mailing.

Jillian Matthews, a neighbor, reinforced concern expressed by Ms. Rolando about speeding vehicles on Alhambra, and said the design including a bike path would increase safety for bicyclists.

With no further audience requests to speak, Ms. MacIntyre closed the public hearing portion of the application.

Ms. Meyers made a motion to approve the second alternative design (the neighbors' preference) based on testimony that both designs were acceptable to City staff and either would achieve the goal of slowing traffic. Ms. Maroon seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Bennett, Ms. Maroon, Ms. Meyers, Mr. Sanabria, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

Mr. Sanabria suggested to Mr. Delgado that Cadiz Avenue intersection should be addressed in the near future.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2008-15:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for Matheson Hammock Park located at 9610 Old Cutler Road, generally bounded by Journeys End Subdivision and a portion of the Coral Gables deep waterway to the north; the Snapper Creek Property to the south; Old Cutler Bay Subdivision and Avocado Land Co. to the west; and Biscayne Bay to the east. The applicant requested design approval for the construction of a new “Dockmaster” building. This item was deferred from the Historic Preservation Board meeting of October 16, 2008.

Referencing excerpts of the October 2008 Board meeting minutes, Ms. Kautz reviewed action during that meeting, reviewed photographs of the proposed dockmaster building, site plan, overview of Matheson Hammock Park, road improvements, floor plans and elevations. She then turned the presentation over to Miami-Dade County presenters.

Howard Gregg, Deputy Director of the County’s Park and Recreation Department, was introduced and, in turn, introduced his colleagues, Frank Faragalli, Assistant Director for Operations, and John Forbes, project architect.

Mr. Gregg reviewed the overall project for context, presented the scope and scale of the Park and the area being addressed as associated with the marina. He relayed the decision to address needs of office space for Park management staff, to provide an office for the dockmaster and also to add parking. The application also included space for a sailing school.

Mr. Faragalli presented planned uses of the facility and spaces. He explained that Matheson Hammock was one of several parks where integration of marina and park managers needed to occur to allow staff to work together and to centrally locate administrative efforts. He reviewed current status of the sailing school, and pointed out that showers, laundry equipment, vending and meeting areas were also included in the design.

Mr. Sanabria probed about the amount of staff and the square footage to accommodate their needs. Mr. Faragalli said that four staff members would occupy the 4,300 square foot building on a regular basis, and responded that the cost of the building was budgeted at \$2.3 million. He said the dockmaster building was part of the County’s overall marina improvement program. Mr. Sanabria expressed concern about the budgeted cost to house four staff members.

Mr. Forbes reminded the Board that he was asked to examine the scale, materials and landscaping for the site at the October meeting, and presented a more detailed landscape design as well as the design of the building, the square footage for each area, the materials proposed and roof tiles, all designed to capture the same aesthetic of the existing dockmaster facility. He said the site, currently vacant, was selected to allow the dockmaster to observe boat ramps and other marina components. The new building would be ADA approved.

Board members questioned uses and sizes of spaces for conference rooms, the sailing school and plans for the existing dockmaster building, which will be used by Miami-Dade County Marine Patrol.

Ms. MacIntyre pointed out that a significant concern at the previous meeting, and the primary reason for deferral, was the master plan for the park. Mr. Gregg said a Request for Proposal had been issued for construction of additional boat storage and was currently under review. He anticipated a recommendation resulting from the RFP within two to three months, that would ultimately be forwarded to the County

Commission. The successful proposal would have to fulfill all regulatory requirements of the County and the City of Coral Gables. If the proposal moved forward, it would be reviewed by this Board. The possible boat storage would be in the general vicinity of the current compound storage in an enclosed area.

Ms. Meyers referred to the three pressing needs identified by the County for the park (office for park management, office for dockmaster/sailing school and additional parking), and requested the master plan for additional parking. Mr. Gregg responded that the proposal would provide 23 new spaces, with only 11 required by Code, and pointed out the location of the proposed parking spaces. Discussion of the details of parking considerations and needs of marina patrons continued.

Mr. Gregg described how the boat storage RFP was advertised and explained that it requested a vessel storage facility for Matheson Hammock. Mr. Sanabria asked for details of the proposed boat storage facility. Ms. Kautz interjected that she attended the proposal presentation and said there were three proposals, all for structures. Mr. Gregg said he had not seen the proposals, but said the RFP requested boat storage for a minimum of 200 vessels. He said typical boat storage facilities were two- to three-tier structures. Mr. Sanabria confirmed that either a crane or forklift would be needed to move boats, and confirmed that marina revenues would fund the dockmaster facility and that County funds were available for the boat storage facility.

Mr. Gregg countered that the dockmaster building would not only house four employees, but would serve other functions. Ms. Meyers questioned the purpose of shower and laundry facilities. Mr. Gregg responded that they would serve needs of transient vessels occupying slips on a rental basis, though these visitors were not permitted to sleep on their vessels overnight.

Ms. Kautz verified the parameters of the historic district as the property east of Old Cutler Road. She also verified that the boat storage project would be reviewed by the Board. Mr. Gregg said the park would not contain boat repair or maintenance operations, though boat fueling is available.

Mr. Forbes reported that the project received preliminary approval from the Board of Architects, and received minor comments from the Development Review Committee (DRC). Ms. Kautz said the DRC meeting revealed the site was zoned for special use and this type of facility was not allowed. Therefore, the proposal would be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Board and needed approval by the City Commission. In the absence of additional information, Ms. Kautz said staff had initially recommended in favor of the project, adding that the proposed dockmaster building was not intended to match the historic building, but to harmonize with existing park buildings.

Ms. MacIntyre expressed concern that there was no master plan that included this project, and reminded County officials that clarification had been requested. She then invited audience members to speak to the issue.

Mr. Seth Stopek relayed that he leased a 50-foot slip in Matheson Hammock Park for the past ten years, and said that a shower facility in the dockmaster building was absurd. He also said the building size was substantially out of proportion with other park buildings and a waste of County funds. The park, he continued, was increasingly crowded with boat trailers and, regarding transient boater needs, he said he was not even permitted to sublet his own space (vacant for six to seven months each year), nor could he allow a friend or family member to use the space for a night without paying additional fees to the park. He objected to the \$2.3 million expenditure, and said if the County intended its facility to compete with privately-owned marina facilities, it would destroy the park for most of its traditional and customary visitors.

Mr. Charles Girtman, 744 Tibidabo, said he had kept a boat at Matheson Hammock since the park opened after Hurricane Andrew. He provided a copy of the RFP to Mr. Sanabria for examination. Referring to the last meeting with County officials regarding this application, he said the County was asked to bring their entire master plan for the Park to the Board. At a public hearing held at Matheson Hammock, attended by 125 people, all objected to the proposal with the exception of five people. Two City meetings with Building and Zoning Director Ed Weller and Ms. Kautz were held at the insistence of citizens, and Mr. Girtman read a letter from Mr. Weller that summarized the meeting, essentially stating that the County was keeping a low profile about their plans for east Matheson Hammock.

Mr. Girtman relayed past park history, particularly how it had been enjoyed by families in the community for several years. He discussed significantly crowded parking conditions, the height of the proposed building, stated that Castle Harbor sailing school was not much more than a port used for a boat rental business, concluding that he urged protection of Matheson Hammock Park for the present and future. He encouraged more prudent use of \$2.3 million for Park improvements, and urged the Board to protect the Park.

There being no other public speakers, Ms. MacIntyre closed the public hearing portion of the application.

Board comments:

- The County appears to want use of a natural shoreline and green space to erect a tall building for its use. If the dockmaster needs a new building, it should be on a much smaller scale.
- There is an overload of traffic along Old Cutler Road now, and more should not be encouraged.
- It seems the County wants to build the dockmaster office now and add boat storage to it thereafter.
- The proposed building is out of scale and out of place.
- The integrity of the historic site needs to be preserved.

Mr. Sanabria made a motion to deny the application. Ms. Maroon seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Bennett, Ms. Maroon, Ms. Meyers, Mr. Sanabria, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2008-23 (continued):

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 214 Florida Avenue, a contributing structure within the MacFarlane Homestead Subdivision Historic District, legally described as Lot 28, Block 1-B, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans PK Comb and Supplem., as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 81, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requested design approval for the demolition of the structure.

Ms. Kautz refreshed the Board about the December 2008 meeting decision to defer this item for 60 days to allow the self-appointed task force to research ideas for the house and district as a whole. The task force had a few productive meetings that included some Board and community members as well as representatives of the University of Miami, a general contractor, Ellen Uggucioni, Cathy Rivenbark, a representative from Coconut Grove Collaborative and a few others. She said that alternatives were being sought and, at this time, staff had no recommendation, but did not want the building demolished. She added that Code Enforcement wanted the building demolished as a hazard, but agreed to defer the order until hurricane season. They would not mitigate fees until compliance was achieved. Staff will continue to work with them to find a solution.

Ms. MacIntyre said the sole interest of the task force was to protect the historic district and this house. The group was seeking ways to find funding, or to purchase the property for a restoration project. They are seeking possible private, public and commercial sources of funding. She concluded that clear tasks resulted from last evening's meeting, and a few weeks were needed to complete them.

Property owner Margaret Davis said she wanted to demolish the house and sell the land. Ms. Kautz asked if Ms. Davis would allow the task force to investigate alternatives and defer the application for another month or two. Ms. Kautz confirmed that fines were no longer being levied on the house. She added that there were several houses in the district in varying states of disrepair, and three others similar to this house. Ms. MacIntyre pointed out that if one of the houses were demolished, others could follow.

Ms. MacIntyre invited members of the audience to speak.

Leona Ferguson Cooper, Chair of the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association, said the circumstances were a hardship for Ms. Davis. Saying she was offended that the task force met without including members of the immediate community, Ms. Cooper said any future meetings about distressed properties in their community should include people in the association as they were dedicated to preserving their community. She encouraged the Board to allow Ms. Davis to do as she asked, and suggested that other alternatives be explored, such as building a replication of the house.

Ms. Bennett advised that the brainstorming meeting was held to determine the availability of any funding or program resources that could be presented to Ms. Davis. No decisions were made. Ms. Cooper replied that the people of the neighborhood were sensitive to issues pertaining to it as many born there and felt strongly about preserving it. Ms. Cooper was assured that she and the association would be invited to participate in any future meetings to find a solution to Ms. Davis' problem. Ms. Davis said if the property were demolished, she would likely build another house on the site.

Ms. MacIntyre invited other audience members to speak. Hearing no requests, she closed the public hearing.

Ms. Maroon made a motion to approve the application for demolition. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Thomson, Ms. Maroon, Mr. Sanabria. Nays: Ms. Bennett, Ms. Meyers, Ms. MacIntyre. The motion failed.

Ms. Bennett made a motion to defer the application for 60 days. Ms. Meyers seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Bennett, Ms. Meyers, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: Ms. Maroon, Mr. Sanabria, Ms. Thomson. The motion failed.

Mr. Sanabria made a motion to refer the item to the City Commission without a recommendation. The motion was not seconded.

Ms. Cooper and Ms. Davis indicated they would appeal to the City Commission. Discussion was held between Board members, Ms. Kautz and Ms. Cooper regarding the importance of preserving the entire district, and also about involving Ms. Davis in every aspect of the process since she expressed a wish to demolish the property. Ms. Cooper's final comment was that the City bore the burden about how the houses were built.

Ms. Maroon and Ms. Rolando left the meeting, after which there was a short break in proceedings.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2008-21:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 320 Miracle Mile, legally described as Lots 15 and 16, Block 1, Coral Gables Crafts Section, according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 10, Page 40, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested design approval for the construction of additions and alterations. A variance was requested from the Coral Gables Zoning Code Article 5, Section 5-1409 (B) for the minimum required parking.

Representatives of 320 Miracle Mile deferred the application until a full Board was present.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATIONS:

645 Madeira Avenue, legally described as Lots 25 and 26, Block 4, Coral Estates, according to the plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 19, at Page 7, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Ms. Kautz presented the property, for which a letter of significance was issued in June 2008. Determination of significance was based on age and architecture. When the area was annexed to the City in 1948, plans for the house were not transferred to the City. Thus the names of the architect and original owner were unknown. Ms. Kautz displayed photographs of the property as it currently appears. She advised that staff did not make recommendations to the Board on significance determinations as the properties already met the minimum criteria for designation.

Attorney Alan Krischer addressed the Board, introduced the project architect, and stated that the owner, Sergio Pino, and Dr. Paul George had to leave the meeting. Mr. Krischer acknowledged that this was the beginning of a two-step process, that the owner had requested a building permit to demolish the property, and staff had issued a significance letter. In response, Mr. Krischer reported that extensive research was conducted regarding the history and records of the property to determine if the criteria for preservation had been met. Based on their review, significant alterations to the property left the structure with nothing remarkable or exemplary about the architecture. The home was recently purchased by Mr. Pino to build a new home for his daughter. Because of the existing poor conditions of the home, the architect said that any of the existing systems were in such poor condition that demolition would be an appropriate step. He added that there were no permit or City records, nor did they know the identity of the original architect, builder or owner. The City of Miami, the permitting authority in 1932, had no records, original plans or design for the home. Mr. Krischer then reviewed each aspect of the house, concluding that what remained was non-distinct from an architectural standpoint. He requested that the Board not deem the house historically significant in view of this lack of distinction, and to reverse the significance letter and permit the owner to move forward with the application to demolish the house.

Ms. MacIntyre invited other audience members to speak. Hearing no requests, she closed the public hearing and invited Board commentary.

During Board discussion with Mr. Krischer, Ms. Kautz reviewed a variety of altered features, and indicated that the specific case for historical significance for this house was not as strong as others brought for Board consideration; however, she said the house contributed to the time period in which it was built.

Ms. Meyers made a motion not to move forward with the designation procedure for this property, acknowledging that the house is not so significant that it is worthy of designation because of alterations and because of its lack of historical documentation. Mr. Sanabria seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Meyers, Mr. Sanabria, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Bennett, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Mr. Sanabria announced that this would be his last Board meeting, stating that he was leaving with regret. He thanked Board members for the opportunity to serve with them, after which Ms. MacIntyre expressed appreciation for his service on behalf of the Board.

Ms. Kautz said the discussion about the proposed purchase of 2901 Ponce de Leon Boulevard would be deferred to the next meeting when a full Board was present.

In response to Ms. Thomson's inquiry about the marker for the home of Roxcy Bolton, Ms. Kautz said she would invite Jorge Hernandez to give an update on this matter.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara N. Kautz
Historic Preservation Officer