



The City of Coral Gables

Historical Resources Department

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 15, 2009, 4:00 p.m.

City Commission Chambers

405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida

MEMBERS:	O	N	D	J	F#	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	APPOINTED BY:
Dorothy Thomson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II
Margaret Rolando*			P	P	P+	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Ernesto Santos	E	P	P	P	A	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Comm. Maria Anderson
Venny Torre*							P	P	P	P	E	P	P	Comm. Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Dolly MacIntyre	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P-	P	Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
Richard Heisenbottle*												P	P	Historic Preservation Board
Joyce Meyers	E	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P-	E	City Manager
Gay Bondurant*										P	P	P	P	City Commission
Sharon Langer*												P	E	City Commission

+ Ms. Rolando recused herself from discussion of one application at the special February meeting.  
- Ms. MacIntyre arrived at 6:53 p.m.; Ms. Meyers departed at 6:54 p.m.

STAFF:

Kara Kautz, Historic Resources Officer  
Simone Chin, Historic Preservation Administrator

- A = Absent
- P = Present
- E = Excused
- \* = New Member
- ^ = Resigned Member
- # = Special Meeting

GUESTS: Ted Faust, Oscar Compain, Alex Acosta, Rogelio Arenas, Estrella Arenas, Silvia Unzueta, Nick Di Donato, Judy Santos, Natividad Soto, Oscar Roger, George Volsky, Roxcy Bolton, Burton Hersh, Lester Garcia, Claire Georgatos, Jim Georgatos, Hector Fernandez, Laura Russo, Debra Kolsky; City Staff: City Manager Patrick Salerno, Assistant City Manager Maria Alberro Jimenez, Dan Keys, Martha Salazar-Blanco, Walter Carlson, Carlos Mindreau, Ed Weller

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

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dolly MacIntyre at 4:09 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.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON:

Ms. Bondurant made a motion to nominate Dolly MacIntyre as Board Chair. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion. As there were no further nominations, Ms. MacIntyre's election was deemed unanimous.

- **Changes proposed to Tweed Room:** Ms. Kautz asked the Board to focus on physical alterations to the historic structure, stating that the operator and Commission would address the Tweed Room.
- **Paving materials:** The architect brought samples of materials, to be reviewed later in the meeting.
- **Porte cochere and pedestrian entrance:** The area was re-designed. The proposed design of the plantings, fountain and sidewalk were shown and briefly explained.
- **Parking:** No changes are proposed to existing parking. Parking requirements are not the purview of the Board, and were deemed adequate by Zoning. The Planning and Zoning Board and the City Commission will address parking as it relates to building usage.

Ms. Thomson argued that additional parking was necessary for additional facility usage.

Nick Di Donato, President and CEO of Liberty Entertainment Group and project applicant, thoroughly reviewed his company's background as he conducted a Powerpoint presentation. He emphasized his plans to ensure the success and long-term viability of the facility.

Proposed design plans were displayed and detailed. Samples of proposed exterior materials were shown and explained and, regarding planters and landscaping, Architect Ted Faust said the group would work with the City's Public Service Department.

Mr. Di Donato continued his presentation, further describing proposed alterations and uses of the facility. He reviewed the uses and placement of the proposed materials. The porte cochere, fountains, sidewalk, and areas for service and garbage were also described.

Ms. MacIntyre invited audience members to comment.

George Volsky, 1008 Alhambra Circle: Stating that he was speaking for himself and two neighbors, Mr. Volsky said the City was fortunate to have Mr. Di Donato engaged in the project. He requested proper notification of meetings and signage, agreed with Ms. Thomson regarding insufficient parking, added that landscaping was insufficient and expressed concern about outdoor activities on the western side of the building. He urged approval of the application.

Roxcy Bolton, 124 Cadima Avenue: Ms. Bolton expressed concern about contamination and requested an EPA examination for contamination safety. She also requested knowledge of the entity responsible for payment of the many initiatives proposed for the property.

Assistant City Manager Jimenez responded that the applicant would pay for proposed improvements, and the City would pay for elimination of contamination by DERM and related experts. She described the phases of the remediation, and stated that post-remediation monitoring would be conducted. A copy of the notice sent to property owners within a 1,000-foot radius lettering them know about the de-contamination will be sent to Ms. Bolton along with a list of the property owners so noticed.

Regarding the environmental issue, Mr. Di Donato said the City immediately notified him of the contamination and said they were working cooperatively to get the issues resolved. Ms. Jimenez added that once Mr. Di Donato receives all his approvals, his group can proceed with work on the interiors and areas unaffected by the contamination.

In view of ongoing comments by Mr. Volsky and Ms. Bolton, Mr. Santos commented that it was not unusual to discover contamination in older buildings. He pointed out that the issue was being managed, and the procedure was in place to clean the site.

In response to Ms. Bolton's question about involving the Health Department in approvals for the outdoor dining portion of the facility, Ms. Jimenez assured her that all the appropriate approvals were a normal part of the regulatory process.

Hearing no further requests for public input, Ms. MacIntyre closed the public hearing portion of the application.

**CASE FILE COA (SP) 2009-20:**

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 114 Oak Avenue, an empty parcel of land within the "Mac Farlane Homestead Subdivision Historic District," legally described as Lot 21, less beginning at NE corner, thence S to SE corner, thence W 4 feet, thence N to point of beginning, Block 3-A, MacFarlane Homestead Subdivision, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 81, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requesting variances from Article 4, Division 1, 4-101(D)9 and 4-101(D)4B for lot coverage, side setback, and total side setback. The applicant was granted conditional design approval for the construction of a new residence at the Historic Preservation Board meeting of May 7, 2009.

After reviewing the background of the application, Ms. Kautz said the review at hand was to address variances that were unknown at the time of the previous hearing. The variances were needed because the subject property is 46 feet wide at the front and increases to 50 feet wide in the rear of the property, resulting in non-parallel sides. The first variance is for a side setback of two feet two inches versus five feet. The second variance is for lot coverage of 38.3% versus 35%.

Mr. Hersh explained in detail how they slightly adjusted the house design after they discovered the true dimensions in the survey. Ms. Russo, representing the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Foundation, advised the Board that they are proceeding with construction, with an anticipated completion date of December 20, 2009.

After Board members clarified depth, utility easement and structure positioning issues, Ms. MacIntyre invited further comment from audience members. Hearing no requests to speak, she closed the public hearing.

**Mr. Santos made a motion to approve the Special Certificate of Appropriateness as well as the three requested variances. Mr. Heisenbottle seconded the motion.**

**Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Mr. Torre, Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.**

**AD VALOREM TAX RELIEF:**

**CASE FILE AV 2007-02:**

An application requesting ad valorem tax relief for the property at 1137 Asturia Avenue, a local historic landmark, legally described as Lot 20, Block 12, Coral Gables Section C, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 26, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The related Certificate of Appropriateness – Case File COA (ST) 2007-42, was granted design approval on June 21, 2007, by the Historic Preservation Board.

During a Powerpoint presentation, Ms. Kautz displayed photographs, relayed the property's history and described alterations to the interiors and exteriors.

Homeowner Silvia Unzueta praised staff for their efforts and help, adding her willingness to participate in showing other homeowners that historic designation and home restoration were positive processes.

Ms. MacIntyre invited other comments from the audience. Hearing no requests to speak, she closed the public hearing portion of the application and called for Board comments.

**Mr. Heisenbottle made a motion to approve the application for ad valorem tax relief. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion.**

Ms. MacIntyre mentioned that it was difficult for the Board to digest information when documentation was received during the meeting, and recommended additional time to study application information. Ms. Kautz apologized for the lateness of the Board's material.

**Ms. Thomson made a motion to rescind former action to approve local historic designation for 839 Palermo Avenue. Mr. Heisenbottle seconded the motion.**

Expressing understanding of the applicants' concern, Mr. Santos said that historic designation is sometimes enforced by the Board and cautioned that rescinding the designation could be an issue of concern later. He urged the Board to remember this case. Ms. Kautz advised that it is clearly communicated to all applicants that even if staff liked a proposed design, the Board might not approve it. Ms. Rolando advised that the house deserved to be designated, adding that architectural plans were sometimes not completely ready. Ms. Arenas appealed on behalf of her husband and his decision to withdraw the designation.

**Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Mr. Torre, Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.**

#### **LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION DETERMINATION:**

##### **CASE FILE LHD 2003-19:**

Consideration of the local historic designation status of the property at 1112 Cordova Street, legally described as Lots 10 and 11, Block 1 Amended Plat of Coral Gables Granada Place Section as recorded in Plat Book 13, at Page 51, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. Applications for the local historic designation and an Accelerated Special Certificate of Appropriateness were presented to the Historic Preservation Board on November 20, 2003 and were granted conditional approval.

Ms. Kautz said the application was a reconsideration of a local historic landmark designation approved in 2003 that was conditioned on restoration work to be done in the associated Certificate of Appropriateness. That work on the COA never occurred. She advised that the Board should consider designation of the property as it exists and whether or not it should remain a local historic landmark. Ms. Kautz called attention to documentation, displayed photographs, described the property's history, architectural features and changes. At the conclusion of her presentation, she stated that alterations over the years had a significant impact on the historic integrity of the property, and said staff opined it could not be locally landmarked based on its original architecture. She recommended removal of the local historic designation.

Architect Hector Fernandez, representing the owners, explained background of the circumstances, and said the owners wanted the designation rescinded as the restoration work never occurred. Ms. Kautz reported that the City Attorney said the language in the resolution indicated the property was designated, despite the issue of the contingency. She also stated that the owners want to construct a small mudroom addition to the rear of the property and don't know how to proceed.

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

**Mr. Heisenbottle made a motion to rescind the local historic designation for 1112 Cordova Street as the previously-approved COA was not acted upon and the building has been severely altered, rendering it no longer justifiably historic. Ms. Bondurant seconded the motion.**

Mr. Santos said the intent of the contingency was to restore the historic fabric of the house, and the intent was unexecuted. Mr. Heisenbottle then explained his reasoning for the motion, and the issues were discussed among Board members.

**Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Torre, Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.**

#### **STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:**

##### **CASE FILE COA (ST) 2009-72:**

An application for the issuance of a Standard Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 2024 Alhambra Circle, a contributing structure within the "Alhambra Historic District," legally described as Lot 14, and the South 5 feet of Lot 13,

Coral Gables Historic Preservation Board Meeting Minutes  
September 15, 2009  
Continued

the Historical Resources Department official. After discussion, Ms. MacIntyre asked Ms. Kautz to notify the Board if staff appeals a Board decision in the future.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kara N. Kautz', written in a cursive style.

Kara N. Kautz  
Historic Preservation Officer