

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES
October 16, 2008, 4:00 p.m.
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida

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

STAFF:

Betty Perez, Historical Resources Department
Simone Chin, Historical Preservation Administrator
Rodney Carbonell, Historic Resources Department

A = Absent

P = Present

E = Excused

*** = New Member**

[^] = Resigned Member

GUESTS: Charles Girtman, Kristie Stephenson, John Forbes, Mike Yaskin, Sameer Majeed, Lora Lastra, Barbara Stein, David Arisco, Orlando Ortego, Kendell Turner, Mark and Marli Lutz, Bruce Brockhouse

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

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dolly MacIntyre at 4:10 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:

Mr. Sanabria made a motion to excuse the meeting absences of Mr. Santos and Ms. Meyers. Mr. Beeman seconded the motion, unanimously approved by voice vote.

MINUTES: MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2008:

Mr. Beeman corrected the first sentence of the last paragraph on page four to read: "Mr. Sanabria and Mr. Beeman stated that developer Oscar Roger"

Mr. Beeman made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 18, 2008 as revised. Mr. Sanabria seconded the motion, unanimously approved by voice vote.

October 16, 2008

Continued

DEFERRAL:

Ms. Chin reported the following deferral: the Historical Significance Determination for 645 Madeira Avenue.

SWEARING IN THE PUBLIC:

Nancy Morgan swore in members of the audience who planned to testify during the meeting.

LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION:

CASE FILES LHD 2008-05 AND COA (SP) 2008-16:

Consideration of the local historic designation of the property at 1430 Milan Avenue, legally described as the Lot 4, Block 69, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 113, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant also requested issuance of an Accelerated Special Certificate of Appropriateness and design approval for the construction of additions and alterations.

Regarding the historic designation portion of the application, Ms. Chin presented the property, thoroughly reviewing its history and features. She stated that staff recommended approval of the local historic designation.

Ms. MacIntyre invited members of the public to speak to the designation portion of the application. Hearing no requests, she closed the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Mr. Beeman confirmed with homeowner Mark Lutz that the paint color on the house was permitted by the City.

Ms. Maroon made a motion to approve the local historic designation of 1430 Milan Avenue. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Beeman, Ms. Maroon, Mr. Sanabria, Ms. Thomson, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

Regarding the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) portion of the application, Ms. Chin conducted a PowerPoint presentation, displaying existing and proposed drawings with the additions.

Mr. Lutz, owner and architect, described renovations for the cottage and detailed proposed changes. Ms. Chin added that variances were not requested and stated that staff recommended approval of the application.

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

Mr. Sanabria made a motion to approve the COA for 1430 Milan Avenue as presented. Ms. Maroon seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Thomson, Mr. Sanabria, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Maroon, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

CASE FILES LHD 2008-10 AND COA (SP) 2008-17:

Consideration of the local historic designation of the property at 2209 Segovia Circle, legally described as Lot 7, Block 21, Section "B", according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant also requested issuance of an Accelerated Special Certificate of Appropriateness and design approval for the installation of a driveway. A variance was requested from Article 5, Section 5-1403 (C) 5b, for the allowable setbacks for a driveway.

Regarding the local historic designation portion of the application, Ms. Chin displayed current and historic photographs of the property while describing the history, architecture and previous homeowners. She concluded by stating that staff recommended approval of the designation based on its architecture, and pointed out that the homeowner was present at the meeting. However, the homeowner did not request an address to the Board.

October 16, 2008

Continued

Ms. MacIntyre invited members of the public to speak to the designation portion of the application. Hearing no requests, she closed the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Mr. Beeman made a motion to approve the historic designation of 2209 Segovia Avenue. Mr. Sanabria seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Maroon, Mr. Sanabria, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Thomson, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

Design drawings were then displayed and described by Ms. Chin as she reviewed the application for issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for the installation of a new driveway, pointing out its specific features. She concluded her presentation by stating that staff recommended approval of the COA for the driveway installation. Staff also recommended approval of the variance, explaining details supporting the recommendation, stating it was a reasonable request to alter a situation not caused by the homeowners.

Ms. MacIntyre invited members of the public to speak to the designation portion of the application. Hearing no requests, she closed the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Mr. Sanabria made a motion to approve the COA as recommended by staff for 2209 Segovia Avenue. Mr. Beeman seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Maroon, Mr. Sanabria, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Beeman, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:

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.

Ms. Chin comprehensively described the history of the property as she conducted a PowerPoint presentation featuring numerous photographs. She explained that the COA application requested a new dockmaster building.

Architects John Forbes and Kristie Stephenson addressed the Board. Mr. Forbes reviewed the applicant's presentation to the Board in May 2008 to seek input for building design. Architects incorporated Board comments and displayed drawings and site plans, described the proposed new building, its accommodations for handicapped individuals, staff and the public, pointing out features incorporated as proposed by the Board.

Ms. Chin stated that staff recommended approval of the application, stating that the design of the dockmaster building took its cues from other structures on the historic site. She advised that none of the existing buildings in Matheson Hammock Park would be removed for this accommodation.

At the invitation of Ms. MacIntyre for public comment, Mr. Girtman addressed the Board. He presented a history of Matheson Hammock Park and described it as currently maximized in terms of capacity. He relayed that he met this day with County Commissioner Carlos Jimenez regarding the 200-dryrack storage unit proposed to be constructed across the street from the proposed dockmaster building, stating that the sailing school would be moved into that building. Mr. Girtman stated that parking on the site was at capacity with 600 parking spaces and 150 boat slips, leaving no room for additional parking. He asked the Board to balance this parking situation with the need for historic preservation, and distributed notices he posted at the Park, and urged either a 60-day deferral or a denial of the application as an inappropriate use of the historic site.

October 16, 2008

Continued

Mr. Forbes expressed lack of awareness of this dispute, stating that he was only aware of the proposal for a dockmaster building and had no knowledge of boat storage. He pointed out the addition of 22 parking spaces, stating that parking appeared adequate. Since he is a boat owner who maintains his boat on the site, he said there was not a parking problem. He added that only three people would be working in the dockmaster building, reiterating that 22 new parking spaces were added with the building.

Mr. Sanabria restated for confirmation that the size of the building (4,300 SF), and that the current dockmaster staff is three people. In response to his question about the need for 4,300 square feet of space, Mr. Forbes responded that staff, severely cramped in current space, would occupy the upper floor of the new building, with meeting room and the sailing school occupying the first floor. Ms. Maroon asked for confirmation that funds for the building would be furnished by Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation Department.

Mr. Girtman said that additional information about the project was covered by a cone of silence, and advised that the County's Parks and Recreation Director should appear before the Board to explain the details.

Mr. Forbes again said he was unaware of any kind of boat storage.

Ms. Chin reminded the Board that with only five members present, all five votes would need to be affirmative to pass a motion.

Ms. Chin confirmed that the entire site of Matheson Hammock Park was designated as a historic district, and anything proposed for the property would be presented to the Board for review and approval. Board members indicated they didn't have enough information to make a decision, but would not be inclined to approve the application at the present time. Ms. MacIntyre concluded that the Board should hear from the County's Parks and Recreation Department to better understand the master plan for the site.

Ms. Maroon made a motion to defer the application until additional information is secured from the Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation Department regarding this application and the master plan for Matheson Hammock Park, including the dockmaster building. Mr. Beeman seconded the motion.

Mr. Forbes requested specific direction from the Board. Ms. MacIntyre responded that the Board wanted to know the master plan for Matheson Hammock Park as well as facts pertaining to dry storage and its impact on the plan.

Mr. Sanabria stated his objections to the size and scale of the building.

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

Mr. Sanabria made a motion to deny the application for the dockmaster building. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion.

Ms. Chin advised that if the Board was unable to pass a motion, the applicant would have the right to request a deferral to the next meeting when all Board members were present.

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

Mr. Forbes requested deferral to the next meeting.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2008-19:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for 412-416 Viscaya Avenue, a contributing structure within the French Normandy Village Historic District, legally described as Lots 11 thru 13 inclusive, Block 6,

Coral Gables Historic Preservation Board Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2008

Continued

Coral Gables French Village, according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 29, Page 71, Public Records of Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested design approval for the installation of solar panels system.

Ms. MacIntyre disclosed that she lived across the street from the subject property and enjoyed a close friendship with the owners. However, she stated that she was able to review the application with impartiality unless Board members objected. Hearing no such objections, the application was presented.

Ms. Chin conducted a PowerPoint presentation and described the history of the district and property while Architect Bruce Brockhouse displayed photographs.

Mr. Brockhouse reviewed and described plans for solar collector panels and two water reservoirs, explaining efforts to receive LEED certification. If approved for LEED certification, this house would be the first residence in the City to achieve this distinction.

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

Mr. Sanabria made a motion to approve the COA for 412-416 Viscaya Avenue in accordance with staff's recommendation and with concurrence of the City Engineer. Ms. Maroon seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Thomson, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Maroon, Mr. Sanabria, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2008-06:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the Miracle Theater located at 280 Miracle Mile, a local historic landmark, a lengthy legal description is on file in the Historic Preservation Office. The applicant requested design approval for the replacement of the marquee. Variances from Article 5, Division 19, of the Coral Gables "Zoning Code" were requested for the installation of "LED" signage. This was deferred from the Historic Preservation Board meeting of August 21, 2008.

Ms. MacIntyre explained that the applicant had brought a sample of the proposed marquee and placed it outside for viewing. Ms. Chin advised Board members not to speak with each other or the applicants during the viewing. Discussion would take place when the meeting reconvened inside Commission Chambers.

Prior to the outdoor viewing of the sample, Ms. Chin conducted a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting the property's history, architecture and proposal.

Ms. Thomson disclosed that she served voluntarily on the board of directors for Actors Playhouse, and said the City Attorney did not think this represented a conflict of interest since she received no remuneration. There were no objections from Board members.

Mr. Arisco, Mr. Ortego and Ms. Stein were introduced. Mr. Ortego was introduced as a representative of Dectronics, the largest producer of LED signage in the world, and the person working on this project with Actors Playhouse. The Board was updated on new and emerging technology for marquees.

Mr. Arisco explained that parts for replacement of current marquee lettering was only available from one source in the U.S., described the loss of letter production companies, reviewed safety issues, and explained the theater's aim to ensure the marquee appeared as close as possible to the original. He described new technology and its use throughout the United States on marquees.

Mr. Ortego reviewed technology used for video displays or static images for outside displays, and responded to Board questions. Ms. Stein and Mr. Arisco joined in positive comments about the appearance and safety of the proposed application during discussion.

October 16, 2008

Continued

At 5:45 p.m., the Board and applicants observed the sign from the front entrance of City Hall as it was affixed to the side of a vehicle parked across the street. Everyone returned to Commission Chambers at 5:50 p.m.

Ms. Turner, identifying herself as a devoted preservationist, explained research she is conducting on the history of Miracle Mile as part of a book-writing project. She described losing the original marquee on the theater as "devastating," stating that the loss would compromise the history of the structure as the marquee is a character-defining feature, and would alter the building as a destination. She expressed opposition to the proposed application, and suggested the theater consider display cases within the alcove as a compromise to fulfill their need. Discussion continued.

Board members questioned Mr. Arisco, Mr. Ortego and Ms. Stein about alternatives to the marquee change, LED lighting, costs involved and differences between the original and proposed marquee treatments.

Ms. Chin advised that Ms. Kautz had asked her to convey two key points to the Board: 1) replacement letters for the marquee were available as evidenced by on-line research; 2) Marquees outside the local area and shown as examples at the previous meeting were not original marquees. She said that staff's recommendation was to deny the application and to repair the marquee rather than replace it.

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

Ms. Maroon made a motion to approve the proposed LED signage in concept for the Actors Playhouse marquee to allow the applicants to move forward.

Mr. Beeman indicated he was not inclined to give conditional approval. Mr. Sanabria asked the applicants to provide a sample of the actual signage they were proposing, rather than one that was less technological sophisticated and required imagination to envision.

Mr. Arisco expressed willingness to examine the higher pixilation application, but stated concern that any effort might not be adequate to replicate the original marquee signage. Mr. Sanabria replied that the Board understood technology and archaic issues, and commented that a 30-day extension would be advisable.

Ms. MacIntyre suggested Board consideration of a deferral to allow the applicants to address issues raised during discussion and consider alternatives.

Mr. Beeman made a motion to defer the application to the next meeting to allow Actors Playhouse time to further their research and develop alternatives. Ms. Sanabria seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Sanabria, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Maroon, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

Ms. Chin reported that City Hall received the Historic Preservation Award from the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce.

The City Commission approved ad valorem tax abatement for the City for 1101 North Greenway Drive and 1910 Country Club Prado. The County stated it viewed the house on North Greenway as an excellent example of restoration.

NEW BUSINESS:

Board Member Resignation:

Mr. Sanabria announced his resignation from Board service as he has taken on new endeavors. He praised staff for their work, effectiveness and efficiency, and thanked Board members for the opportunity to serve with them. Ms. MacIntyre thanked Mr. Sanabria for his service and thoughtful comments.

Coral Gables Historic Preservation Board Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2008

Continued

ADJOURNMENT: 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara N. Kautz
Historic Preservation Officer