



The City of Coral Gables

Historical Resources Department

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 8, 2014, 4:00 p.m.

City Commission Chambers

405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida

MEMBERS:	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	APPOINTED BY:
	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	14	
Dorothy Thomson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	Mayor Jim Cason
Margaret Rolando	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Alejandro Silva	P	P	A	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	-	P	Comm. Patricia Keon
Venny Torre	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	E	Comm. Frank C. Quesada
Tony Newell*			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	Comm. Vince Lago
Carmen Guerrero	E	P	P	P	P	E	E	E	P	P	-	P	Historic Preservation Board
Robert Parsley*										P	-	P	City Manager
Dolly MacIntyre	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	City Commission
Judy Pruitt	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	City Commission

STAFF:

Dona Spain, Historic Preservation Officer
Kara N. Kautz Assistant Preservation Officer
Emily Ahouse, Historic Preservationist
Yesenia Diaz, Administrative Assistant
Bridgette Thornton, Deputy City Attorney

A = Absent
P = Present
E = Excused
* = New Member
^ = Resigned Member
- = No Meeting

GUESTS: Jeannett Slesnick, Mario Garcia-Serra, Aldo and Ramona Busot, Dan P. May, Vincent Damian, Marlin Ebbert, Ariel Fernandez, Anthony Di Donato, Manuel A. Vega, Eneami Bestman, Paige A. Harper, Nelson de León, Mario Bravo, Majid Bossoughi, Amalia Hernandez, Neill Hernandez, Adriana Pino, Nelson de León

RECORDING AND PREPARATION OF MINUTES: Nancy C. Morgan, Coral Gables Services, Inc.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Silva at 4:05 p.m. A quorum was present.

MINUTES: MEETING OF MARCH 20, 2014:

Ms. MacIntyre made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 20, 2014 as presented. Ms. Pruitt seconded the motion, unanimously passed by voice vote.

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Newell made a motion to excuse the meeting absence of Mr. Torre. Ms. Pruitt seconded the motion, unanimously passed by voice vote.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT and DISCLOSURE OF CONTEXT:

Mr. Silva read for the record the statement regarding lobbyist registration and disclosure. Board members who had ex parte communication or contact regarding cases being heard were instructed to disclose such communication or contact.

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 8, 2014

Continued

DEFERRALS: None

PUBLIC SWEARING IN: Ms. Morgan administered the public swearing in for those testifying during the meeting.

SPECIAL CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS:

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2014-002: An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the Country Club of Coral Gables, located at 997 North Greenway, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as Lots 1 through 9 and Lots 37 through 39, Block 32, Coral Gables, Section "B," according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. Variances from the Coral Gables Zoning Code have been requested for a proposed outside dining area.

Ms. Spain pointed out emails and letters received about the application from Mayor and Mrs. Donald Slesnick, Vincent Damian, Dan May, Aldo and Ramona Busot and Mr. and Mrs. Valera. She advised that the letters/emails would be forwarded with an informational packet to the Planning and Zoning Department.

As Ms. Spain displayed property photographs, she reviewed the property's 2009 application and the current application; the 2009 Board's decision on the 2009 application; and the ultimate decision of the City Commission to adopt an ordinance that disallowed outside dining at the property.

The site plan was reviewed while the current application's request was explained, during which time drawings were displayed to demonstrate where the proposed pavers and stairway would be situated.

Ms. Spain read into the record the three variances requested in the application (as published in the staff report), concluding that staff recommended a motion to grant design approval for the alterations as requested by the applicant, approval of the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness, and a motion to grant the requested variances associated with the Certificate of Appropriateness application.

Mr. Di Donato relayed a desire to accommodate the community and said Liberty Café customers requested outside seating. During a discussion period, he explained reasons for requesting stairway access to the pool deck; addressed questions about parking problems on North Greenway Drive, and responded that most Liberty Café customers were local and either walked or bicycled to the site.

Ms. Spain pointed out that the outside dining portion of the application did not require a parking variance.

Mr. Silva acknowledged the arrival of Ms. Rolando at 4:20, and invited further audience input.

Summary of audience comments:

Mr. Damian:

- Allowing outside dining makes this a commercial venture in a residential neighborhood;
- Outside dining is not in keeping with the historic property;
- All seven variance criteria must be met; "yes" responses to all seven criteria are inappropriate;
- Five suitable places exist within the country club property that are suitable for outdoor dining;
- The application should be denied.

Mr. Busot:

- Everything proposed in the application will generate more neighborhood parking problems, particularly on the North Greenway Drive side of the building;
- Club valets exacerbate parking problems by adding cars along North Greenway Drive in addition to club guests who self-park;
- Outdoor dining is not suitable for the neighborhood;
- The application should be denied.

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 8, 2014

Continued

Ms. Harper:

- Heavy traffic and excessive parking along North Greenway Drive affects the safety of neighborhood children;
- Noise, arguments and other disturbances often occur at night after large events, and noise is clearly audible inside homes;
- Commercial outdoor dining will diminish property values;
- The application should be denied.

Mr. May:

- Keystone pavers on each side of the door to the building is not historically correct;
- He cited numerous actions (unrelated to the application) of country club ownership and areas throughout the property that he objected to and/or that differed from original plans (also submitted in writing);
- The application should be denied.

Ms. MacIntyre told Mr. May she was disturbed that staff had to spend at least \$500 in time and materials preparing over 1,600 pages of repetitive emails and lists that primarily addressed parking and flag protocol, neither of which was in the province of the Board.

Mr. Bossoughi (saying his comments also represented those of his neighbor, Ms. Pino):

- Concern expressed about possible plans to pave the area on the west side of the property.
- Heavy traffic and parking problems throughout the neighborhood;
- Concern expressed about people smoking and drinking at the proposed outdoor seating area;
- Concern expressed about the property changing the character of the neighborhood;
- The application should be denied.

Ms. Spain advised that the application did not include plans for the west side of the property.

Mr. Di Donato:

- The Liberty Café, open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., is a family establishment;
- The café carries beer and wine; no “hard” liquor;
- A petition signed by over 1,000 people requests outdoor seating;
- The proposed stairway will be used as an entryway for weddings and provide access to the pool deck;

Mr. Fernandez (also representing his wife’s views):

- Although they are frequent patrons of Liberty Café, they object to the application for outdoor seating as it isn’t necessary since no one uses the benches in place there now;
- Expressed concern about a stairway to the pool deck;
- Greatest objections are parking problems and trucks loading/off-loading on North Greenway Drive.
- The application should be denied.

Ms. Ebbert:

- The meeting was improperly noticed.

Ms. Spain detailed meeting notices that were given and stated that all City notice requirements were met.

Ms. Slesnick:

- The written communication from Mayor Slesnick stated their objections to the application;
- Concern expressed about three front doors at the entrance of the club facility;
- Concern expressed about existing and ongoing parking problems;
- Club overbooking fills the neighborhood with parked vehicles;
- She and Mayor Slesnick were asked by area residents to petition the City Commission to ban parking on North Greenway Drive;
- The application and variances should be denied.

Receiving no further requests to speak, Mr. Silva closed the public hearing.

During lengthy discussion, Board members voiced understanding about parking and traffic concerns. While empathizing with neighbors, they focused attention on the issues of the application and discussed appropriate action.

After all Board opinions were voiced, Mr. Silva suggested developing a functional solution for the proposed stairs on the other side of the pool deck, one that would not impact the historic nature of the building. From an architectural viewpoint, he advised that the pavers would not interfere with reading the green space as a lawn. He expressed an overall concern about the “piecemeal” nature of the country club’s applications and suggested a more holistic approach to planning.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to deny issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the stairway entrance to the pool deck as depicted on the plans. Ms. MacIntyre seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Pruitt, Ms. Guerrero, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. MacIntyre, Mr. Silva. Nays: Mr. Newell. During roll call, Mr. Parsley relayed his membership in the country club’s athletic club and recused himself from voting on issues related to the country club. There followed a discussion about proper recusal procedures, about which Mr. Parsley was unaware. Mr. Parsley was allowed to abstain from voting on the motions and thereafter left the room until all aspects of the application were concluded.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to grant a variance to allow the proposed keystone pavers (approximately 348 square feet) to have a setback facing upon North Greenway Drive of approximately thirteen feet eight inches vs. a minimum setback of thirty-five feet facing upon North Greenway Drive or South Greenway Drive as required by Appendix A – Site Specific Zoning Regulations, Section A-7 – Section B-C(1) of the “Coral Gables Zoning Code.” Ms. MacIntyre seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Pruitt, Ms. Guerrero, Ms. Rolando, Ms. MacIntyre, Mr. Newell, Mr. Silva. Nays: Ms. Thomson.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to grant a variance to allow the proposed keystone pavers to have a setback facing upon Granada Boulevard of approximately forty-six feet nine inches vs. a minimum setback of fifty feet facing upon Granada Boulevard as required by Appendix A – Site Specific Zoning Regulations, Section A-7 – Section B-C(4) of the “Coral Gables Zoning Code.” Mr. Newell seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Guerrero, Ms. Rolando, Mr. Newell, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Pruitt. Nays: Mr. Newell, Mr. Silva.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to grant a variance to allow the property to provide approximately nineteen point four percent landscaped open space vs. property shall provide landscaped open space of not less than thirty-five percent of the area of the building site as required by Section 4-204 (D) (3) of the “Coral Gables Zoning Code.” Mr. Newell seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Newell, Ms. Rolando, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Pruitt, Mr. Silva. Nays: Ms. Thomson, Ms. Guerrero.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to approve issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the keystone pavers as depicted on the plans. Mr. Newell seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Newell, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Pruitt, Ms. Guerrero, Ms. Rolando, Mr. Silva. Nays: Ms. Thomson.

Ms. Thomson left the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 8, 2014

Continued

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2014-003 – An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 745 Minorca Avenue, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as Lots 26, 27 and the East ½ of Lot 28, Block 25, Coral Gables Section “B,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The application requested design approval for an addition and alterations to the residence.

Ms. Spain reviewed the property and application background as current/historic photographs and the proposed site plan were displayed. She concluded that staff recommended approval of the application on the condition that the wood doors and spindled railing remain on the exterior elevation.

Mr. de León, architect representing the homeowners, displayed and reviewed details of restoration plans. At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. and Mrs. Hernandez expressed their eagerness to renovate and preserve their home.

Hearing no requests for further audience input, Mr. Silva closed the public hearing.

Ms. MacIntyre made a motion to approve the design proposal for the restoration and alterations to the existing residence, on condition that the wooden spindled railings remain on the exterior of the east elevation of the existing porch after it is enclosed (if possible) including the one and two-story additions, a new carport and driveway, a new pool, and site improvements including a pool, summer kitchen, and terrace to the building at 745 Minorca Avenue, a local historic landmark. Ms. Rolando seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Newell, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Pruitt, Ms. Guerrero, Mr. Parsley, Mr. Silva.
Nays: None.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to approve issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 745 Minorca Avenue, subject to the conditions that the original wooden doors on the south elevation remain and the wooden spindled railings remain on the exterior of the east elevation of the existing porch after it is enclosed. Ms. MacIntyre seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Pruitt, Ms. Guerrero, Mr. Parsley, Mr. Newell, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Rolando, Mr. Silva.
Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2014-004 – An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 748 Alhambra Circle, a Coral Gables Cottage and a contributing resource within the “Alhambra Circle Historic District,” legally described as Lot 6, Block 23, Coral Gables Section “B,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The application requested design approval for an addition to the residence.

During a presentation that displayed a location map, historic/current photographs, existing/proposed site plans, Ms. Kautz reviewed the application, adding that the Board of Architects approved the plans on April 3rd, and that no variances were requested. She concluded by stating that staff recommended approval of the design and issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness with conditions: if alterations are proposed for any of the other facades or the garage structure, issuance of a separate Certificate of Appropriateness will be necessary for approval; the design of the vent on the rear elevation of the covered terrace needs to be altered slightly so as to not copy the original detail above the front door on the main elevation of the residence.

Mr. Bravo, architect representing the homeowner, addressed the Board and agreed to staff conditions.

Mr. Silva invited additional audience comment. Hearing no requests, he closed the public hearing.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to approve the design proposal set forth in the plans and for approval for issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions: : if alterations are proposed for any of the other facades or the garage structure, issuance of a separate Certificate of Appropriateness will be necessary for

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 8, 2014

Continued

approval; the design of the vent on the rear elevation of the covered terrace needs to be altered slightly so as to not copy the original detail above the front door on the main elevation of the residence. Ms. MacIntyre seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Newell, Ms. Pruitt, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Guerrero, Mr. Parsley, Ms. Rolando, Mr. Silva.

Nays: None.

BOARD ITEMS / CITY COMMISSION / CITY PROJECTS UPDATE:

Analysis for proposed City of Coral Gables Zoning Code Amendment – Expansion of the Transfer of Development Rights Program to include historically designated multi-family resources in the North Ponce area (defined as north of Navarre Avenue, east of LeJeune Road, and south of S.W. 8th Street within the Coral Gables city limits) as sending sites.

Ms. Ahouse reviewed the background of the project; multi-family resources currently designated as local historic landmarks within the North Ponce area; North Ponce's approximate future potential for multi-family historic designation; and a database of potential future transfer of development rights (TDRs) from multi-family resources in North Ponce. She stated staff conclusions that the proposed Zoning Code revision will incentivize the historic preservation of the significant multi-family buildings within North Ponce; will not only allow funding to provide for necessary maintenance and restoration of the significant buildings, but the TDR program requires a maintenance plan for the historic building ensuring its future care; will significantly increase the City's ability to promote the protection, enhancement and preservation of the historic properties within its limits, with only minor text changes to the Zoning Code.

For the exercise to also be useful to Planning and Zoning and the City Commission, Mr. Silva asked for the number of multi-family resources between those identified by staff as being designated and the pool of existing multi-family properties in the area that could be designated. Ms. Spain agreed to furnish a report prepared about five years ago that identified the number of properties in the North Ponce area by age. She said the issue is that owners of the staff-identified buildings and any other properties that could potentially be designated are not allowed to demolish their buildings. The buildings are legally nonconforming, have very small interior units, need repair, and many owners do not have the means to fund the repairs. The City has tried to help the North Ponce area and the owners of properties that could be designated, and this Zoning Code revision may make a positive difference for them.

Ms. Spain explained that when the revision is approved, staff will maintain a list of potential sending sites. In these cases, they will need to be designated. As an example given in response to a Board question, she relayed that, in the past, a developer identified properties on Miracle Mile that could be designated, purchased the properties, applied for and received property designations and then transferred the development rights.

Ms. Spain advised that the next steps, if the Board recommends approval of the revision, will be to forward the matter to the Planning and Zoning Department to be placed on a future Planning and Zoning Board agenda as a text amendment to the Zoning Code. If the Planning and Zoning Board recommends approval, the matter will be forwarded to the City Commission for final approval.

Mr. Silva invited audience comment.

Mr. Garcia-Serra spoke briefly in support of a Board recommendation for amendment approval, and thanked staff for all their efforts and work on the matter.

Mr. Silva closed the public hearing as there were no further requests from the audience.

Mr. Newell made a motion that the Historic Preservation Board recommend adoption of this amendment to the Zoning Code, and recommend that the amendment be placed on the meeting agenda of the Planning and Zoning Board as soon as possible. Mr. Parsley seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Pruitt, Ms. Guerrero, Mr. Newell, Mr. Parsley, Ms. Rolando, Ms. MacIntyre, Mr. Silva.

Nays: None.

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, May 8, 2014
Continued

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

Ms. Spain advised that the Florida Trust Conference will be held next week.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Ms. MacIntyre distributed copies of the Alliance Review from the National Association of Historic Preservation Boards, and recommended that they submit an application for membership (included in the Review) and support the association's work and efforts.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to be considered, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dona M. Spain". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dona M. Spain
Historic Preservation Officer