

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES
December 20, 2007, 4:00 p.m.
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida

MEMBERS:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTED BY
Dorothy Thomson*									P	P	P	P	Mayor Donald D. S.
Catherine Stewart	P	P	P	E	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	Vice Mayor William
Ernesto Santos	E	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	Comm. Maria And
Edmund Parnes	P	E	P	E	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	Comm. Rafael "Ra
Dolly MacIntyre*						P	P	P	P	P	P	E	Comm. Wayne "C
Michael Beeman	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	Historic Preservati
Joyce Meyers	P	E	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	E	P	City Manager Davi
Lisa Bennett	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	City Commission
Shirley Maroon	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	E	City Commission

A = Absent

P = Present

E = Excused

* = New Member

STAFF:

Kara N. Kautz, Historic Preservation Officer

Betty Perez, Historical Resources Department

Simone Chin, Historical Preservation Administrator

Rodney Carbonell, Historical Resources Department

GUESTS: Josephine Johnson, Assistant City Attorney Lourdes Alfonsin-Ruiz, Zeke Guilford, Barbara Zwick, Gay Bondurant, William Cooper, Leona Ferguson Cooper, Doug Jolly, Karen Moore, Mike Sardinas, Eduardo Goudy, Melanie Brown, Andy Parrish, Peter Kiliddjian, Rex Wilkinson, Zeke Guilford, Waldo and J.C. Torres, Glenn Pratt, Marshall Bellin, Maria Suri

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

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lisa Bennett at 4:08 p.m. A quorum was present.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT and DISCLOSURE OF CONTEXT:

Ms. Bennett 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. Meyers made a motion to excuse meeting attendance of Ms. MacIntyre and Ms. Maroon. Mr. Santos seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

MINUTES: MEETING OF NOVEMBER 15, 2007:

Referencing page five, paragraph eleven, Ms. Thomson commented that her remarks about comments made to her by members of the homeowners association were made to her in the past when she was a member of the City Commission.

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Ms. Kautz reported that she reviewed the November meeting tape, a portion of which included Ms. Thomson's remark about a recent social event at which time she spoke with Mr. Cooper. Ms. Thomson said there was no comment made other than a greeting and his mention of "nothing from the board." Ms. Bennett asked that Ms. Thomson's comments be included in the record.

Mr. Beeman made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 15, 2007 with clarification. Mr. Santos seconded the motion, which were unanimously passed by voice vote.

DEFERRALS:

Ms. Kautz reported deferrals as follows: Case File LHD 2007-14, 1700 Cortez Street; Case File COA (SP) 2007-20 was removed from the agenda as the applicant satisfied the requirements of the Board; Case File COA (SP) 2007-29, 657 North Greenway Drive.

SWEARING IN THE PUBLIC:

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

LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS:

CASE FILE LHD 2007-06 Consideration of the local historic district designation of the "Alcazar Avenue Historic District", a lengthy legal is on file in the Historic Preservation Office.

Referring to a comprehensive report provided to Board members as a PowerPoint presentation was conducted, Ms. Kautz summarized the history, persons of significance, architecture, boundaries and properties included in the proposed district. Of 61 structures within the boundaries, six are listed on the local register, 46 of which were built during the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. After describing architecture and typologies, Ms. Kautz suggested limiting the period of significance to 1953, noting that the consultants were generous in their application of "contributing" status. She included 536, 601 and 500 Alcazar as non-contributing structures as too many changes had been made in the original character of the structures over the years. However, she stated that staff advocated design review for the non-contributing properties within the district.

Ms. Kautz reviewed criteria for significance, elaborated on the criteria beyond the body of the report and stated how the district complied with the criteria. She concluded by stating that staff recommended approval of the local historic district.

Ms. Bennett invited members of the audience to speak in favor of the designation.

Josephine Johnson (co-founder of Dearborn School), 427 Alcazar: praised staff for an excellent report and spoke in favor of the district designation.

Gay Bondurant, 446 Alcazar: supported the designation and urged Board approval.

Barbara Zwick and Karen Moore: Ms. Zwick spoke for both owners of Alcazar properties in support of the designation.

Doug Jolly, 604 Alcazar: spoke in support of the designation.

As no one else requested to speak, Ms. Bennett closed the public hearing portion of the issue and asked for Board comments.

Dr. Parnes made a motion to approve the local historic district designation of the Alcazar Avenue Historic District. Mr. Beeman seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Thomson, Ms. Meyers, Dr. Parnes, Mr. Santos, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Bennett. Nays: None.

SPECIAL CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS:

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2007-28 Continued An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 2000 North Greenway Drive, a non-contributing property within the “Country Club of Coral Gables Historic District”, legally described as Lots 8 and 9, Block 14, Coral Gables Section “E”, according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 8, Page 13 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the demolition of the existing structure and the construction of a new residence.

Ms. Kautz presented this application as a resubmission by the owner and architect that addressed comments and suggestions made by the Board at the last meeting. Ms. Kautz confirmed that the existing structure was non-contributing and it was doubtful that it ever could be considered contributing.

Eduardo Goudy, owner of 2000 North Greenway, described his research into the home’s history and changes, after which Architect Mike Sardinas added information about progress of the application through the City’s Building and Zoning and Code regulations. Renderings of the proposed new residence and photographs of neighboring homes were displayed. He reviewed changes made to the design and showed how Board suggestions were incorporated.

In response to Ms. Bennett’s request for staff’s opinion about the changes made to the design, Ms. Kautz said staff was satisfied with the changes made by the applicant.

Ms. Bennett invited members of the audience to speak in favor of or in opposition to the application. Hearing no requests, she closed the public participation portion of the issue.

Ms. Meyers commented that the Board was not following the Secretary of Interior Standards by supporting new construction that was so obviously a copy of a historic style, saying the more appropriate approach was to build a structure for its own time and place. She expressed hope that her comments would be taken into consideration in the future.

Ms. Stewart stated concern about use of the term historic as it seemed a marketing tool in terms of styles used in new construction. Ms. Kautz said Standards required that the architecture be distinguishable, sympathetic but not exact, blending but not mimicking. Discussion was held regarding intent and application of the Secretary of Interior Standards.

Ms. Thomson, Mr. Goudy, Ms. Kautz and Ms. Bennett engaged in discussion about concerns of neighbors who spoke at the November meeting in opposition to the demolition of the structure. Ms. Thomson asked for a definition for “McMansion.” Ms. Kautz replied that the term was descriptive and discussed Code provisions that applied.

Mr. Beeman made a motion to approve the demolition of the existing structure and the design of the new residence as presented. Dr. Parnes seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Thomson, Ms. Meyers, Dr. Parnes, Mr. Santos, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Bennett. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2007-24 Continued An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 701 North Greenway Drive, a contributing property within the “Country Club of Coral Gables Historic District”, legally described as Lots 19 and 20, Block 23, Coral Gables Section “B”, according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the installation of windows and doors

Ms. Kautz pointed out a letter in Board packets from Ms. Melanie Brown regarding her research into issues pertaining to her application for the installation of new windows and doors as suggested by the Board at the November meeting. Her letter also included a request to approve the application as originally made.

Ms. Brown comprehensively described the research she conducted, companies contacted, alternate designs considered and costs attendant to each, concluding that if she installed impact glass on all openings, it would cost an additional \$18,000 to \$20,000, a sum she and her husband thought was excessive. Ms. Santos praised Ms. Brown for her research and for complying with the Board's request, and Dr. Parnes concurred.

Dr. Parnes made a motion to approve the application as presented. Mr. Santos seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Beeman, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Meyers, Dr. Parnes, Mr. Santos, Ms. Stewart, Ms. Bennett. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2007-27 Continued An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 4718 Brooker Street, a contributing property within "MacFarlane Homestead Subdivision Historic District", legally described as Lot 1 less the South 65 feet, Block 1-A MacFarlane Homestead Subdivision, according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 81 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the demolition of the existing structure and the installation of at-grade improvements.

While a PowerPoint was conducted, Ms. Kautz reviewed the history of the application, concluding that the property owner, Andy Parrish, was asked to obtain input from the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association. She attended the meeting with Mr. Parrish who, she said, was present at this meeting and would address the Board if requested.

Ms. Bennett invited members of the audience to speak.

William A. Cooper, President of the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association, reported that the association voted unanimously to recommend demolition of 4718 Brooker Street and the installation of at-grade improvements as proposed by Mr. Parrish. He also appealed to the Board to urge the City's Code Enforcement Officers to cite properties in their area of the City (Golden Gates Division) that needed correction to ensure equitable enforcement of the Code.

Leona Ferguson Cooper, 200 Washington Drive: Ms. Cooper requested and received a clarification of the at-grade improvements. During the discussion, she recommended neighborhood green space rather than parking accommodations for the space. Ms. Cooper also voiced objection to the proposed wall for the site.

Ms. Thomson made a motion to recommend and advise the City Commission to investigate and enforce equitable enforcement of Code in the Golden Gates subdivision. Ms. Stewart seconded the motion.

For the record, Ms. Bennett read a letter from Andrea Lynch Cole, forwarded to Ms. Bennett by Mayor Slesnick, which expressed concern about the condition of 1032 Cotorro in the French City Village, which has been allowed to become derelict and is disintegrating, and to take immediate action to preserve the structure.

Ms. Kautz advised that her department had been working with Code Enforcement on these issues and would continue to do so, and also discussed grant monies that were being considered to rehabilitate many of the properties.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Santos, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Meyers, Dr. Parnes, Ms. Bennett. Nays: None.

Ms. Stewart engaged Ms. Cooper in discussion about wooden structures in the Golden Gate subdivision and the MacFarlane Homestead. Ms. Kautz voiced a high regard for wooden structures and spoke of staff's struggle with the recommendation for demolition, pointing out, however, its substantial loss of integrity.

Ms. Thomson reopened discussion of the proposed wall as Ms. Cooper had expressed concern about it. Ms. Kautz reviewed the site plan, landscaping and features, and Mr. Parrish clarified various issues as discussion broadened.

Ms. Meyers made a motion to approve the demolition and the installation of at-grade improvements as proposed. Mr. Beeman seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Beeman, Ms. Thomson (*with the condition that Mr. Parrish get input from the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association regarding the proposed wall), Ms. Meyers, Dr. Parnes, Mr. Santos, Ms. Bennett. Nays: Ms. Stewart.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2007-26 Continued An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 600 Alhambra Circle, a local historic landmark, legally described as Lots 2 and 3, Block 21, Coral Gables Section "B", according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the construction of an addition and at-grade improvements. A variance has also been requested for the allowable height for a wall.

Ms. Kautz conducted a PowerPoint presentation as the history and photographs of the property were reviewed. She stated that the applicant requested construction of an exterior terrace as well as a wall height variance. The existing wall on the east side of the property, she advised, was the same height as the wall the applicant wanted to install.

Architect Peter Kiliddjian reviewed and described displayed plans, after which Mr. Santos discussed the variance requests and reasons for the request. Ms. Kautz reported that staff recommended approval of the variance, but commented that the large, mature palm trees on the northwest corner of the property should not be disturbed by the wall. Mr. Kiliddjian agreed to install the wall at a safe distance from the trees to ensure their preservation.

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

Rex Wilkinson, 422 Alcazar Avenue: Regarding the proposed wall height, Mr. Wilkinson commented that permitting the proposed height would set a negative precedent and would not provide privacy on a 15,000 square foot lot.

Ms. Kautz said staff opined that the wall would provide privacy and screening on Alhambra Circle. Mr. Kiliddjian said landscaping would be added to the front of the wall. Ms. Thomson suggested that two feet of wrought iron on top of normal wall height could be acceptable. Ms. Meyers advised that the request did not appear to be a hardship or reason to compromise historic integrity, and expressed preference for a four-foot wall. If the Board did decide to approve it, she continued, she suggested setting the wall back at least five feet, and adding a landscape buffer. Ms. Bennett, Mr. Beeman and Dr. Parnes concurred.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to deny the variance for a five foot, six inch wall. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Dr. Parnes, Mr. Santos, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Meyers, Ms. Bennett. Nays: None.

Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve the project with the four-foot wall. Mr. Santos seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Meyers, Dr. Parnes, Mr. Santos, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Bennett. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2007-13 Revised An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 1044 Coral Way, a local historic landmark, legally described as Lot 1 and the west 32 feet of Lot 2, Block 11, Coral Gables Section "A," according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 102, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requesting approval for variances from the Coral Gables Zoning Code for the allowable floor area ratio.

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Ms. Kautz stated that the application requested a revision to the original COA that was granted on June 21, 2007. On July 25 and 31, project architects presented revised drawings to staff for administrative approval. Subsequently, a zoning analysis was performed, at which time it was discovered that the property exceeded the FAR of the new Code. The only change in this application was for the courtyard because of City zoning changes. Ms. Kautz pointed out the presence of the owners, attorney and architect.

Mr. Guilford, as a representative of the owners, reviewed Code provisions as they related to this issue, relating meetings with staff during efforts to resolve problems attendant to the new Code provisions, during which time unanimous agreement was reached that this section of the Code did not make sense and would need to be re-addressed. With staff's recommendation of approval of the FAR variance, Mr. Guilford urged Board approval.

Mr. Pratt briefly spoke about the issue. A discussion was held about Planning and Zoning's intent for the provisions, with Ms. Meyers advising, as an Urban Planner, about reasons for the provision.

Dr. Parnes made a motion to approve the variance. Mr. Beeman seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Meyers, Dr. Parnes, Mr. Santos, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Bennett. Nays: None.

Mr. Guilford spoke to another part of the application related to an extension of the time period for building permits, stating that the applicant wanted to waive it. Ms. Kautz stated Staff's recommendation to grant the extension of the variance to three years, so as not to leave it open-ended.

Mr. Santos made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Beeman seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Thomson, Ms. Meyers, Dr. Parnes, Mr. Santos, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Bennett. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2007-30 An application for the issuance of an Accelerated Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 435 Alcazar Avenue, a potential contributing structure within the "Alcazar Avenue Historic District", legally described as Lot 21, Block 4, Coral Gables 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 is requesting design approval for alterations to the existing structure.

Ms. Kautz stated that this property was one of the newest designated homes as a part of the Alcazar District. Ms. Chin conducted a PowerPoint presentation as current and historic photographs were displayed and the property's history was related. She pointed out that the applicants' proposed changes included relocation of the front door, extended steps on the stoop, a wall on the left side of the steps, and a front wall treated with cut coral stone. As a Coral Gables cottage, the garage structure could be enclosed to be used as living spaces, which, in this application were proposed as a den and laundry facility. The proposal called for the removal of one window, for which staff recommended the memory being retained by scoring or relief. She concluded that staff recommended approval of the application, excluding the proposed wall on the left side of the steps to be instead treated with a metal railing, and that coral rock should not be applied to the front wall. Ms. Chin also said that sill lines should be maintained for continuity in appearance and muntins should be added.

Owner Maria Suri reviewed the major changes proposed in the application, noting that the wall on the side of the steps could be changed. Ms. Kautz pointed out that the Zoning Code required a handrail on both sides of steps and Ms. Suri agreed to the change. Ms. Kautz displayed the proposed and original windows as Ms. Suri explained her reasons for the proposed design. Mr. Santos expressed problems with the proportion of the window, and Ms. Suri clarified that the proposed window could not be as wide as the original if a new front door were to be added.

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Ms. Chin presented the owner's paint color choice, stating that staff approved the color. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the front window, its size and proximity to the door.

Dr. Parnes made a motion to approve the application with the removal of the stair wall and the addition of handrails in accordance with Code. Mr. Beeman seconded the motion.

Mr. Santos advised the applicant to put three "J" type windows on the living room window for better proportion, to which Ms. Suri replied that the window would then be nearly as wide as the existing window and she objected to the size. Mr. Santos also expressed concern about moving the door as well. Mr. Santos suggested that window opening "I" remain wider, a suggestion agreed to by Ms. Meyers to retain as much as possible the original design. Ms. Meyers asked for clarification about the muntins being included in the motion.

Mr. Santos amended the motion to have the architect study the window in the living room. Dr. Parnes expressed agreement with the amendment.

The motion was restated to approve the project as previously stated with a directive to have the applicant reconsider the front window and bring other changes back to the Board. Dr. Parnes agreed to this revision.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Thomson, Ms. Meyers, Dr. Parnes, Mr. Santos, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Beeman, Ms. Bennett. Nays: None.

BOARD ITEMS/CITY COMMISSION UPDATE:

Ms. Kautz reported that the Art in Public Places Ordinance passed on second reading. She also invited Board members to attend the rededication ceremony of the DeSoto Fountain on January 8, 2008 at 6 p.m.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

Ms. Kautz reported that issues related to 1032 Cotorro was heard at the Code Enforcement Board, the owner is addressing deficiencies and has 21 days to obtain a permit.

Mr. Beeman requested updated information about houses on LeJeune Road near University. He will meet with staff to further review the issues.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara N. Kautz
Historic Preservation Officer