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CITY OF CORAL GABLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

EXCERPT

OF

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

ITEM COA (SP) 2015-005

PARTICIPANTS:

- Albert Menendez, Chairperson
- Bruce Ehrenhaft, Board Member
- John Fullerton, Board Member
- Alicia Bache-Wiig, Board Member
- Xavier Durana, Board Member
- Michael Maxwell, Board Member
- Cesar Garcia-Pons, Board Member
- Dona Spain, Board Member
- Peggy Rolando, Board Member

- Kara N. Kautz, Historic Preservation
- Warren Adams, Historic Preservation
- Cristina Suarez, Assistant City Attorney

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Certificate of Appropriateness

Item COA (SP) 2015-005

CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Okay. First case is Item No. 1, ad valorem tax relief, an application requesting ad valorem tax relief for the property at 4209 Santa Maria Street, a local historic landmark and contributing resource within Santa Maria Street Historic District, legally described as Lots 11 and 12, Block 96, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part 5, according to the plat thereof as recorded in plat book 23 at page 55 of the records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

The related special certificate of appropriateness, COA (SP) 2015-005, was granted design approval by the Historic Preservation Board on June 18th, 2015.

MS. KAUTZ: Thank you.

This is the location map of the property on Santa Maria Street. It was permitted in 1925 and designed by Robert Law Weed. It is actually one of two Italian country homes that were constructed on Santa Maria in the '20s. It was designated as a local historic landmark individually in November of 1981 and designated as a contributing resource

1 within the Santa Maria Street Historic District in
2 November of 2007.

3 So the application requesting tax relief is
4 for the renovation of the historic structure and
5 the construction of an addition and alterations to
6 the residence. There are three COA files that are
7 associated with this, one of which you all
8 reviewed, (SP) 2015-05, and two standards that we
9 had reviewed administratively which were 2015-162
10 and 2016-173.

11 I want to remind you that only portions of the
12 proposed work will actually apply to the tax
13 exception which is finally determined by the
14 property appraiser's office.

15 So I'll scroll through some pictures, some
16 before and afters of the property so you all can
17 see the scope of work while I describe what they
18 did.

19 This is a current picture taken yesterday.

20 These are before pictures and after.

21 So they got new impact-resistant casement
22 windows to match the original configuration, new
23 barrel tile roof, stucco repair, painting of the
24 house, new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing
25 systems, complete interior configuration,

1 structural work that was also done to stabilize and
2 sustain the building.

3 There's a two story addition that consisted of
4 expanding the kitchen on the first floor and master
5 bedroom suites on the second floor.

6 There was a one story addition to the rear of
7 the home that you can see in this photograph to
8 expand and enclose a covered terrace as the great
9 room. The covered terrace is added, as you see in
10 this photo, surrounding the new swimming pool and
11 pool deck area.

12 Side improvements included the installation of
13 a new driveway, an auto court, and walkways,
14 installation of new swimming pool and deck,
15 installation of new landscaping, and a perimeter
16 wall and gates.

17 And I'll finish scrolling through.

18 That is it. And we are recommending approval
19 of the ad valorem abatement.

20 The owners and the architect are here if you
21 have any questions for them.

22 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Questions?

23 First of all, let's see, is there anyone in
24 the audience who would like to speak in favor of
25 this case?

1 Mr. Portuondo?

2 MR. PORTUONDO: Can I?

3 MS. KAUTZ: Yeah, go ahead.

4 MR. PORTUONDO: Good afternoon. Rafael
5 Portuondo, Portuondo Perotti Architects. I figured
6 after being here I might as well say something
7 about the house.

8 It was a great house to work on. It was
9 actually Dona's old house, and I know that we did
10 our best to make it -- to make her proud. And so
11 it means a lot to us the fact that we had the
12 opportunity to do it.

13 So the owners are here and they've been living
14 in it for like a year, like almost two-and-a-half
15 years, and it's been tough getting through this
16 whole COVID thing, so we're actually glad to be
17 seeing you guys in person again.

18 So thank you for having us today. And, Dona,
19 thank you for having a beautiful house.

20 MS. SPAIN: I want to make a few comments
21 after you get to when the board can speak.

22 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Okay. Is there anyone in
23 the audience who would like to speak in opposition
24 of this case?

25 Okay. Then I'll close out the public hearing

1 portion and open it up.

2 Dona?

3 MS. SPAIN: So I purchased that home in 1994.
4 I raised my children there. I had wonderful times.
5 That back porch we added, so that was not something
6 that you altered that was original to the house.

7 I can't tell you how happy I am that you ended
8 up with Ralph Portuondo as the architect because he
9 did such a great job.

10 And I'm amazed about the roof terrace. That
11 roof -- that window that you all turned into a door
12 was originally a door going out into a tiny little
13 balcony in the 1920s that wrapped around the house,
14 and when we put that terrace on we turned it into a
15 window. So you're actually bringing that feature
16 back the way it was originally.

17 And how cool it is that you can step out onto
18 a second floor porch with a sauna overlooking the
19 golf course. Okay. I really like that. I'm just
20 saying.

21 MR. PORTUONDO: You're invited. You're
22 invited.

23 MS. SPAIN: Trust me, you don't want me.

24 Anyhow, thank you very much for doing such a
25 nice job and have many, many years of happiness

1 there.

2 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Anything from the board
3 members? If not, I will entertain a motion.

4 MR. FULLERTON: I'd like to move approval.
5 And compliments from this board to the applicant
6 and the job that was done by the architect.

7 However, I do have some complaints about the
8 plans. I'll talk to you about that sometime in the
9 future, but I think we need to get the word out to
10 architects in general to, you know, organize their
11 plans in a way that makes it a little easier for us
12 to understand.

13 MS. KAUTZ: Well, these, just so that you
14 know, are a little bit different than what you
15 normally see or should normally see for a project.
16 These are actually the permit drawings that we
17 require to be submitted, you know, they're not the
18 usual format of existing and proposed, they're the
19 actual permit drawings which are a requirement.

20 MR. FULLERTON: I understand.

21 MS. KAUTZ: Okay. I just wanted to make sure.

22 MR. FULLERTON: Understood. That's why I'm
23 not making a big deal out of it right now. In
24 general the plans are much easier to read than most
25 of the plans that we get. I will compliment you on

1 that for sure. Thank you.

2 My motion is to approve it.

3 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Okay. Do I have a second?

4 MS. ROLANDO: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Ms. Rolando seconds it.

6 THE CLERK: Ms. Bache-Wiig?

7 MS. BACHE-WIIG: Yes.

8 THE CLERK: Mr. Menendez?

9 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Yes.

10 THE CLERK: Ms. Rolando?

11 MS. ROLANDO: Yes.

12 THE CLERK: Mr. Garcia-Pons?

13 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yes.

14 THE CLERK: Mr. Ehrenhaft?

15 MR. EHRENHAFT: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Mr. Maxwell?

17 MR. MAXWELL: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Ms. Spain?

19 MS. SPAIN: Absolutely.

20 THE CLERK: Mr. Fullerton?

21 MR. FULLERTON: Absolutely.

22 THE CLERK: Mr. Durana?

23 MR. DURANA: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: Motion passes.

25 MS. KAUTZ: Thank you.