



COA (SP) 2017-001
February 16, 2017

Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts

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**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR THE PROPERTY AT
4125 SANTA MARIA STREET
A CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE WITHIN
“THE SANTA MARIA STREET” HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Proposal: The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework. Variances have also been requested from Article 4, Section 4-101 (D) (4) and (5), Article 5, Section 5-108 (D) and Article 4, Section 4-101 (D) (9) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for minimum side setbacks and maximum floor area ratio.

Architect: Rafael Portuondo, Portuondo Perotti Architects

Owner: Claudio R. Alvarez (Claudio E. Alvarez TRS / CNC ITrust)

Folio Number: 03-4119-001-4310

Legal Description: Lots 9 & 10, Block 96, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Five, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 23, Page 55, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Site Characteristics: This property is located on the east side of the intersection of Santa Maria Street and Pinta Court. The primary elevation of the residence faces northwest onto Santa Maria Street. The lot configuration is irregular due to its corner location.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

In November of 2007, the “Santa Maria Street Historic District” was listed in the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places. It is comprised of properties located along Santa Maria Street from Bird Road to Blue Road. The residence at 4125 Santa Maria Street is considered a contributing resource within the “Santa Maria Street Historic District.” Designed in 1946, the residence was designed by the architectural firm of Steward and Skinner (as a home for Mr. and Mrs. Coulton Skinner) in a traditional style that plays on the Florida Pioneer Village found on the street. The residence has undergone alterations over the years but retains a high level of historic integrity.

PROPOSAL

The applicant is requesting design approval for multiple additions to the property that include: a two-story addition at the east (rear) of the residence, a new staircase, new covered and open terraces, two second-story additions (atop existing one-story portions), a library/office structure attached to the residence at the south by a covered loggia, and cabana bath. The majority of the current interior layout will be reconfigured as well. Site work proposed includes the installation of a swimming pool and an open terrace with built-in barbecue area to the south of the existing residence, a privacy wall at the south and west property lines, new paver deck to the rear (east) of the residence, and paver driveway. With the proposed additions, the residence will be approximately 7,287 square feet.

The application also requests the granting of variances from Article 4, Section 4-101 (D) (4) and (5), Article 5, Section 5-108 (D) and Article 4, Section 4-101 (D) (9) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for minimum side setbacks and maximum floor area ratio.



Front (west) Façade – ca. 1940s [top]; 2014 [bottom]

2014 photo courtesy of Google Maps

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

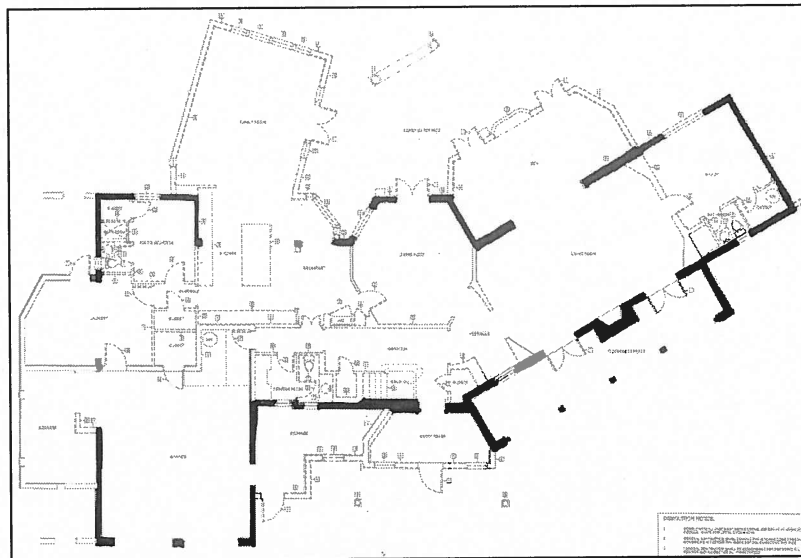
The following Standards have application in this matter:

2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

3. *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*
9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

STAFF OBSERVATIONS

The property currently consists of an irregularly-shaped one- and two-story residence that roughly corresponds to the irregularly-shaped lot on which it sits. The one-story portion spans the north end of the property and consists of both original parts of the residence and later additions. The remainder of the residence is two-stories in height with the exception of a one-story appendage at the south end (current “study”). The proposed design will remove portions of the later additions, and an original covered porch at the rear of the residence.



Outline of original residence.

Although not shaded, the “den” off the living room was originally a screened porch

On the primary (west) elevation facing Santa Maria, the application proposes to remove the existing porte cochere and entry foyer and return the front entrance to its original location. The removal of the porte cochere will allow a blocked-up third window on the second floor to be returned. A storage area to the north of the garage will be converted to an open workshop and the storage area to the south of the garage will be removed entirely. It will be replaced high brick wall to match what was originally there creating a small enclosed courtyard off the proposed dining room. It will be accessed by two new French doors. On the second floor an addition is proposed to the north side of the residence. It extends the existing roofline and has no

fenestration. To the south, the existing house remains unchanged with the exception of a small window on the first floor that is proposed to become a French door. An addition to the south end above the existing one-story portion is proposed. It also continues the existing roofline and has a single casement window with a protruding sill. Further to the south, a one story addition of a cabana bath, a/c closet, covered loggia, and library extend to the south and west. The library is accessed only through the covered loggia.

The rear (east) elevation is the most impacted by the proposed design as most of the existing house will be removed (later additions and original covered terrace /current den) or encapsulated within the proposed additions. The staircase of the residence will be relocated to the rear of the house and acts as a pivot point for the new additions to either side. To the north, a new kitchen with breakfast nook, prep area, and pantry are proposed for the first floor and a new bedroom (Bedroom #1), bathroom, and walk-in closet are proposed for the second floor. To the south, a series of covered terraces are proposed for the first floor and an open terrace and master bath are proposed for the second floor. In elevation, the proposed rear façade takes its design cues from the existing residence with brick wall facing on the lower portions of the additions. The gable ends mimic the gable end found on the front façade and the casement windows and shutters are meant to be evocative of those found on the house. The proposed windows have sills, which differentiate them from the existing residence. The east and south sides of the “detached” library can be seen at the south end of this elevation.

At the north elevation of the existing residence, the proposed additions are clearly visible and much of this façade will be new. An existing storage room to the north of the garage will be converted into an open-air workshop and new openings cut into the existing walls to provide access. An existing first-floor laundry will become a maid’s room and a new window will be added. Another window will be removed and one added in the existing residence. These new windows are proposed to receive new protruding sills. Also visible on this elevation are the proposed kitchen addition on the first floor and the addition of a bedroom (Bedroom #2), two bathrooms, and two walk-in closets. The roofline and eaves of the proposed addition continue those found on the existing residence.

The proposed additions are clearly evident on the south elevation as well. On the first floor, the addition consists of the new one-story cabana bath and a/c closet, covered loggia, and library. On the second floor, the addition consists of the new master bath, master gallery and walk-in closet.

The existing windows and doors throughout the house are proposed to be removed and replaced with impact-resistant units. From the submitted elevation drawings, the new windows and doors will match the existing. The existing windows do not match what was originally on the residence. Decorative wood shutters are being proposed throughout the existing residence and on the new additions. It is not clear whether the existing shutters are to remain or be replaced. The existing shutters do not appear to be original and should return to the original type and configuration.

Site work proposed includes the removal of the existing circular asphalt driveway and a concrete block wall that begins at the southwest corner of the residence and extends south to the property line. A new paver driveway will be installed. A new privacy wall is being proposed at the south

end of the property extends from the southwest corner of the proposed library to the west (front) property line and follows the west and south property lines to the rear of the proposed barbecue terrace. No elevations or information were provided for this wall. A swimming pool is proposed as well. Another terrace/deck is proposed for the rear of the residence. No information was provided on the material to be used on the terraces or driveway.

VARIANCES

The following variances are requested in conjunction with this proposal:

Grant a variance to allow the proposed pool, barbecue, and terrace to encroach into the required fifteen feet (15'-0") setback on the south side vs. Inside lots shall have minimum side setbacks which total twenty (20%) percent of the width of the lot, calculated to be fifteen feet (15'-0") on the south side, as required by Section 4-101 (D) (4) and (5) and Section 5-108 (D) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

Article 4, Section 4-101 (D) (4) and (5) and Article 5, Section 5-108 (D) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code all have to do with required side setbacks on a property. Each section addresses a particular request associated with this application, namely the location of the south terrace, the built-in barbecue, and the pool (respectively). The intent of the Code is for all structures, terraces, or accessory/auxiliary uses maintain the same side setback as is required for the main residence. Due to the existing 5'-0" setback on the north side of the property, the south side setback is required to be approximately 15'-0." Unusual site conditions make this variance a reasonable request. The residence is setback approximately 60'-0" from Santa Maria Street which limits the use of the irregularly shaped rear yard, therefore the terrace, barbecue and pool have been shifted to the south of the house. The pool is proposed to have a 5'-0" setback, the terrace is proposed to have a 4'-1" setback, and the built-in barbecue is proposed at the property line with no setback.

Grant a variance to allow the residence to have a maximum floor area ratio of approximately seven thousand two hundred eighty-seven (7,287) square feet vs. seven thousand one hundred twenty-four (7,124) square feet as required by Article 4, Section 4-101 (D) 9 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

Article 4, Section 4-101 (D) (9) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code provides the percentage calculations for the maximum allowable floor area ratio (F.A.R.) for a single-family residence. For this property, the maximum allowable F.A.R. is calculated to be seven thousand one hundred twenty-four (7,124) square feet. The proposed design parallels the rear property line in order to take full advantage of both the irregular site and also the limited views toward the Riviera golf course behind the property. In order to orient the rooms in the pivoting wing of the residence, quite a bit of solid wall space (poché in the plans) is introduced. According to ground and upper level diagrams on revised Sheet A-003, the solid space accounts for approximately 246 square feet. The variance request is for 163 square feet.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Board of Architects on January 19, 2017.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The application presented requests design approval for multiple additions and alterations to the residence, installation of a swimming pool, terraces, privacy wall, and paver driveway for the residence at 4125 Santa Maria Street.

The application includes removing a significant non-original feature (porte-cochere) and restoring the west façade to its original configuration. The majority of the proposed additions and alterations take place in locations that had been altered in the past or are in locations that do not negatively impact the front (west) elevation facing Santa Maria Street. The exceptions to this are the second floor additions at the north and south ends and the library, which is placed forward (toward Santa Maria Street), although is it only marginally connected to the existing residence. As a whole, the project takes design cues from the existing, historic residence. Differentiation between old and new is primarily achieved through the introduction of window sills at the new windows. Differentiation could also be obtained through the stucco of the new additions not matching the existing stucco texture exactly and by the design of the new wood shutters, which could be slightly different than those found on the historic portion of the house.

Staff would like the following comments incorporated as conditions of approval:

- The proposed windows on the existing residence are not consistent with those found on the original elevations. Similarly those proposed for the additions do not appear to be consistent either (see second floor windows at north elevation, Sheet A-201). Staff would like to further review all of the proposed windows to ensure that they reflect what was originally on the residence and that the new additions are consistent.
- A window or windows should be added on second floor addition to the north of the residence (Bathroom #2) to break up the blank wall.
- The additions to the rear of the residence and the library are shown to be faced in brick. While this is an attempt to pick up on the brick already found on the front façade of the residence, the existing brick is slump brick and not traditional brick. Staff is concerned about the introduction of conventional brick as a new material that is foreign to the residence.
- The historic house is not to be restuccoed and stucco on the proposed additions it to have a different texture.
- The wood shutters on the historic residence should match those originally on the home and shutters on the proposed additions should be of a modified design.
- While the pool and terrace are shown on the site plan, separate Standard Certificates of Appropriateness will be required for the final designs as they are not detailed enough for complete review. Similarly, the wall and gates are indicated on the site plan, but no elevations provided for review. The wall and gates will also require a separate Certificate of Appropriateness.

Variances from the Coral Gables Zoning Code have been requested. The constraints placed on the property due to its irregular shape and the resulting home configuration provide the

justification for the requested variances. The Historical Resources staff finds that the following criteria, necessary for authorization of the variances apply:

Criteria	Yes/No
1) That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures or buildings in the same zoning district.	Yes
2) That the special conditions and circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant.	Yes
3) That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings or structures in the same zoning district.	Yes
4) That literal interpretation of the provisions of the Zoning Code would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of the Zoning Code and would work unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant.	Yes
5) That the variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure.	Yes
6) That granting the variance will not change the use to one that is different from other land in the same district.	Yes
7) That the granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of the Zoning Code, and that such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.	Yes
8) That the granting of the variance is appropriate for the continued preservation of an historic landmark or historic landmark district.	Yes

The proposed addition does not detract from the overall historic integrity of the property.

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE** the design proposal for the one-story addition to the building at 4125 Santa Maria Street, a contributing resource within the "Santa Maria Street Historic District," legally described as Lots 9 & 10, Block 96, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Five, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 23, Page 55, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and **APPROVE with conditions noted above** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

AND

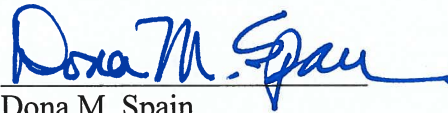
Grant a variance to allow the proposed pool, barbecue, and terrace to encroach into the required fifteen feet (15'-0") setback on the south side vs. Inside lots shall have minimum side setbacks which total twenty (20%) percent of the width of the lot, calculated to be fifteen feet (15'-0") on the south side, as required by Section 4-101 (D) (4) and (5) and Section 5-108 (D) of the Coral

Gables Zoning Code. Specifically, from the south property line the pool setback will be 5'-0," the terrace setback will be 4'-1," and the built-in barbecue will be 0'-0."

AND

Grant a variance to allow the residence to have a maximum floor area ratio of approximately seven thousand two hundred eighty-seven (7,287) square feet vs. seven thousand one hundred twenty-four (7,124) square feet as required by Article 4, Section 4-101 (D) 9 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

Respectfully submitted,



Dona M. Spain
Historic Preservation Officer