

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**January 15, 2009, 4:00 p.m.
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida**

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

** Arrived at 5:03 p.m.

STAFF:

Kara Kautz, Historic Preservation Officer
Rodney Carbonell, Historical Resources Department

A = Absent
P = Present
E = Excused
*** = New Member**
^ = Resigned Member

GUESTS: City Attorney Elizabeth Hernandez; City Architect Carlos Mindreau; Luis Revuelta, H. Marin, Carolina Macias.

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

City Attorney Elizabeth Hernandez conducted a brief workshop on Sunshine Law, public records and quasi-judicial proceedings. Regular meeting proceedings began immediately following the seminar.

The regular meeting was called to order by Chair Dolly MacIntyre at 4:50 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.

MINUTES: MEETING OF DECEMBER 18, 2008:

Corrections to December meeting minutes: page 6, Board Items, 1st paragraph, 3rd line: corrected to read, . . . recognized to speak during meetings . . . ; page 6, Board Items, 4th paragraph, 1st line: corrected to read, Ms. Thomson raised the issue of Castile Park . . . ; page 1, attendance record, corrected to reflect Ms. Bennett's October absence as excused.

Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 18, 2008 as revised. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion, unanimously approved by voice vote.

DEFERRALS:

Ms. Kautz reported deferrals: COA (SP) 2008-15, Matheson Hammock Park, 9610 Old Cutler Road; COA (SP) 2008-21, 320 Miracle Mile; withdrawn by staff: COA (SP) 2008-22, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Road.

Ms. MacIntyre requested that staff research the designation of the entire Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden site, on which only the gatehouse is currently designated historic.

SWEARING IN THE PUBLIC:

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

COMMENT BY FAIRCHILD GARDEN NEIGHBOR:

Ms. Macias, whose property abuts Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, asked for, and received, assurance that neighbors of the Garden would receive notice of the meeting when the Garden's application will be addressed.

SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2008-25:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 1045 Castile Avenue, a residence within the "Castile Avenue / Plaza Historic District," legally described as lot 22 less E 7 FT and all lot 23, Block 8, Coral Gables Section C, according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 8, Page 26, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested design approval for the installation of a standing seam copper roof to be painted white.

Ms. Kautz presented a history of the residence, located in a historically-designated district. Prior to designation of the district, the owners were in process of obtaining a building permit for substantial additions and alterations. Because their permitting process began prior to designation, the project did not come before the Board for design approval. Staff approved the permit drawings as "permitted pre-designation" in April 2008.

In October 2008, a revision to the permit was presented to the Board of Architects. Among other design changes, the applicant requested a change in roofing material. The Board of Architects approved the application. On October 24, 2008, Ms. Kautz filed an appeal to the Commission of the Board of Architect's decision. On November 18, 2008, the appeal was heard by the Commission, which requested Board input.

Ms. Kautz presented photographs of the site, describing the house prior and subsequent to district designation. She stated that the house should be listed as non-contributing as it no longer resembles the original house due to extensive renovations. When the request for a final revision was submitted, it requested approval of a change from the (prior) approved white, flat cement tile to be changed to a copper roof to be painted white.

Ms. Kautz drew attention to the memo to the Board regarding the January 13, 2009 City Commission meeting, at which time language was presented to the Commission that clarified copper as a building material. Staff, she said, is of the opinion that the application to paint a copper roof is inappropriate for the integrity of the historic district as the copper material would lose its natural characteristics and patina. It would also establish a precedent for the introduction of this type of roofing material in other historic districts.

In response to Ms. Meyers' request for information about the City's stance and history about metal roofs, Mr. Mindreau explained the background of the issue, the trial program for metal roofing, the results and current code. He also expressed his opinion regarding the impact on the texture and streetscape in historic neighborhoods, and stated his objection to metal roofs and materials in areas north of Coral Way.

Mr. Santos commented that the house was so drastically changed from the original that it was non-contributing. If the City allows copper roofing, he asked for clarification of the objection of staff to the applicant's request.

Mr. Revuelta, the homeowner and architect, discussed his views on metal roofs, agreeing that some were inappropriate uses. He advocated for installing a copper roof, citing it as energy-efficient and within that which was allowed in the City. He said that the white-painted copper roof would appear similar to the flat white tile roof. He concluded by requesting Board approval of his request.

Board members exchanged questions and answers with the applicant, after which Ms. MacIntyre clarified that the Board was being asked to render an opinion to aid the decision-making process of the City Commission. She then invited other members of the audience to speak to the application. Hearing no requests, she closed the public hearing portion of the application. Board discussion continued.

Ms. Meyers made a motion to recommend approval of the metal roof painted white as requested in the application. Mr. Santos seconded the motion.

Ms. Meyers described the background of her recommendation, concluding with the opinion that new homes, such as the one under discussion, could be built with modern design and materials without changing the character of the neighborhood simply by the installation of a metal roof. She observed that the entire house was out of character in its neighborhood and that the roof, as a single element, would not make a difference. She added that good architecture used design and materials of its time, many of which had connections to the past, and said that metal roofs were materials of our time. She urged Board members to be more forward thinking and progressive about the issue.

From a procedural viewpoint, Ms. Bennett stated that if the exception for copper roofs was interpreted by the Commission as requiring the natural patina, then the Board should not set a precedent by recommending approval of something not permitted. Ms. Thomson concurred with Ms. Bennett's statements. Ms. Meyers pointed out that if the Board were responsible to make the decision, it would be constrained by current legislation; however, she said the Board was responsible for making a recommendation to the Commission, which was the basis for her motion. Mr. Sanabria confirmed facts with the applicant and staff. Mr. Mindreau added that the Board of Architects made decisions based on aesthetics, not on the zoning code, stating that the Building and Zoning Department reviewed applications for zoning regulation purposes. Mr. Sanabria confirmed with Ms. Kautz and Mr. Mindreau that they would not object to the application if the roof were unpainted copper. After further discussion, Ms. Rolando called the question.

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

Ms. Bennett made a motion to recommend denial of the metal roof painted white as requested by the applicant. Ms. Maroon seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Beeman, Ms. Bennett, Ms. Maroon, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson. Nays: Ms. Meyers, Mr. Sanabria, Mr. Santos, Ms. MacIntyre. The motion passed.

CITY COMMISSION UPDATES:

Ms. Kautz reported that the copper roof issue was approved on first reading on January 13, and that second reading would occur at the January 27, 2009 meeting.

The City Commission approved on first reading that two members of the Historic Preservation Board shall be architects as a requirement, in accordance with the Board's past requests. The single Board appointment shall be an architect of the Board's choice. After discussion with Ms. Thomson, Ms. Kautz agreed to provide evidence of the Board's request to have two architects in Board service. Ms. Meyers explained that she had been insistent about having two architects on the Board because of the value architects added to Board deliberations and the credibility of decisions based on their counsel. There followed a discussion about the requirements for specific professions in Board service, and the value of each to the decision-making process. Ms. Thomson stated disagreement with the requirement of having two architects on the Board.

Mr. Santos stated that he, as an architect, also had to be a resident of the City and had to have experience with historic restoration. He disagreed with Ms. Thomson that one architect was sufficient for the Board.

Ms. Kautz attended the January Planning and Zoning Board meeting to listen to the 1800 LeJeune Road site separation case. The application as presented was the Board's recommendation regarding the two 60 foot lots and keeping the house and garage intact. The Planning and Zoning Board approved the Board's recommendation. The case will be presented to the Commission in the coming months.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

Ms. Kautz reported a request by the Commission to investigate the potential purchase of 2901 Ponce de Leon Boulevard. The Board is one among four City boards that needs to be involved in discussion regarding the potential purchase. A joint meeting of the four boards is scheduled for Wednesday, February 4, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Kautz will send a reminder to all Board members.

OLD BUSINESS:

MacFarlane District House: Ms. MacIntyre raised the issue of the MacFarlane District house addressed at the December meeting, at which time it was decided to establish a task force to research issues and discern available resources. Ms. MacIntyre prepared a summary of ideas. Ms. Kautz will coordinate a meeting of the task force for research/fact finding only. The task force research session was tentatively set for Thursday, February 5 at 5:30 p.m. in Commission Chambers. Ms. Meyers, Ms. MacIntyre, Mr. Santos and Ms. Bennett will participate.

475-495 Biltmore Way: Ms. Thomson requested a status report on renovations at 475-495 Biltmore Way. Ms. Kautz said work was progressing on the interior, but the owner appeared to be waiting to begin exterior work until the economy improves.

Castile Park Tree Sign: Ms. Thomson requested an update on Castile Park tree signage research. Ms. Kautz has been understaffed since December, but research will continue as soon as possible.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara N. Kautz
Historic Preservation Officer