

CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING  
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE  
MAY 19, 2021

PARTICIPANTS:

Albert Menendez, Chairperson  
Bruce Ehrenhaft, Board Member  
Alicia Bache-Wiig, Board Member  
Xavier Durana, Board Member  
Raul R. Rodriguez, Board Member  
Cesar Garcia-Pons, Board Member  
Dona Spain, Board Member  
Peggy Rolando, Board Member

Kara N. Kautz, Historic Preservation  
ElizaBeth B. Guin, Historic Preservation  
Warren Adams, Historic Preservation  
Gustavo Ceballos, Assistant City Attorney

1           MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Let's call the meeting  
2 to order.

3           Good afternoon. Welcome to the regularly  
4 scheduled meeting of the City of Coral Gables  
5 Historic Preservation Board. We are residents of  
6 Coral Gables and are charged with the preservation  
7 and protection of historic architecturally worthy  
8 buildings, structures, sites, neighborhoods, and  
9 artifacts which impart a distinct historical  
10 heritage of the city.

11           The board is comprised of nine members, seven  
12 of whom are appointed by the commission, one by the  
13 city manager, and the ninth is selected by the  
14 board and confirmed by the commission.

15           Five members of the board constitute a quorum  
16 and five affirmative votes are necessary for the  
17 adoption of any motion.

18           Lobbyist registration and disclose; any person  
19 who acts as a lobbyist pursuant to the City of  
20 Coral Gables Ordinance 2006-11 must register with  
21 the city clerk prior to engaging in lobbying  
22 activities or presentations before city staff,  
23 boards, committees, and/or city commission. A copy  
24 of the ordinance is available in the office of the  
25 city clerk.

1 Failure to register and provide proof of  
2 registration shall prohibit your ability to present  
3 to the Historic Preservation Board on applications  
4 under consideration this afternoon.

5 Lobbyist is defined as an individual,  
6 corporation, or principal, partnership, or other  
7 legal entity employed or retained, whether paid or  
8 not, by a principal who seeks to encourage the  
9 approval, disapproval, adoption, repeal, passage,  
10 defeat, or modification of any ordinance,  
11 resolution, action, or any decision of any city  
12 commissioner; any action, decision, recommendation  
13 of the city manager, any city board or committee,  
14 including but not limited to, quasi-judicial  
15 advisory board, trust, authority, or counsel, or  
16 any action, decision, or recommendation of city  
17 personnel during the time period of the entire  
18 decision-making process on the action, decision, or  
19 recommendation which foreseeably will be heard or  
20 reviewed by the city commission or a city board or  
21 committee, including but not limited to,  
22 quasi-judicial advisory board, trusts, authority,  
23 or counsel.

24 Presentations made to this board are subject  
25 to the city's false claims ordinance Chapter 39 of

1 the Coral Gables city code.

2 I now officially call the City of Coral Gables  
3 Historic Preservation meeting of May 19th, 2021 to  
4 order.

5 The time is 4:12 p.m. Present today are Dona  
6 Spain, Raul Rodriguez, Alicia Bache-Wiig, Bruce  
7 Ehrenhaft, Xavier Durana, myself, Albert Menendez.

8 Who do we have via Zoom?

9 MS. SPAIN: You have Peggy.

10 MR. MENENDEZ: Oh, Peggy Rolando is here as  
11 well. And I believe we have Cesar Garcia-Pons on  
12 Zoom.

13 MR. GARCIA-PONS: I am.

14 MR. MENENDEZ: Correct?

15 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yes, sir.

16 MR. MENENDEZ: First item, approval of the  
17 minutes. The next item on the agenda is the  
18 approval of the minutes of the meeting held on  
19 April 1st -- April 21st, 2021.

20 Are there any changes or corrections? None?

21 MR. EHRENHAFT: None.

22 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Do I have a motion to  
23 approve?

24 MR. EHRENHAFT: So moved.

25 MS. BACHE-WIIG: I second the motion.

1           MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. A first from  
2           Mr. Ehrenhaft, the second from Ms. Bache-Wiig.  
3           Can you read the role?  
4           THE CLERK: Can you hear me?  
5           MR. MENENDEZ: Uh-huh.  
6           THE CLERK: Okay. Mr. Garcia-Pons?  
7           Is he on Zoom?  
8           MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yes.  
9           THE CLERK: Ms. Bache-Wiig?  
10          MS. BACHE-WIIG: Yes.  
11          THE CLERK: Mr. Durana?  
12          MR. DURANA: Yes.  
13          THE CLERK: Mr. Ehrenhaft?  
14          MR. EHRENHAFT: Yes.  
15          THE CLERK: Mr. Menendez?  
16          MR. MENENDEZ: Yes.  
17          THE CLERK: Mr. Rodriguez?  
18          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.  
19          THE CLERK: Ms. Spain?  
20          MS. SPAIN: Yes.  
21          THE CLERK: Ms. Rolando?  
22          MS. ROLANDO: Yes.  
23          THE CLERK: So moved.  
24          MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Notice regarding  
25          ex parte communications; please be advised that

1           this board is a quasi-judicial board and the items  
2           on the agenda are quasi-judicial in nature which  
3           requires board members to disclose all ex parte  
4           communications.

5           An ex parte communication is defined as any  
6           contact, communication, conversation,  
7           correspondence, memorandum, or other written or  
8           verbal communication that takes place outside a  
9           public hearing between a member of the public and a  
10          member of a quasi-judicial board regarding matters  
11          to be heard by the quasi-judicial board.

12          If anyone has made any contact with a board  
13          member when the issue comes before the board, the  
14          member must state on the record the existence of  
15          the ex parte communication, the party who  
16          originated the communication, and whether the  
17          communication will affect the board member's  
18          ability to impartially consider the evidence to be  
19          presented regarding the matter.

20          Does any board member have any such  
21          communication to disclose?

22                 MR. EHRENHAFT: I have none.

23                 MR. MENENDEZ: Deferrals; we don't have any  
24          deferrals today.

25                 THE CLERK: No.

1 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Swearing in. If any  
2 persons in the audience will be testifying today --  
3 oh, after each -- okay. We'll do it that way.

4 Okay. So the first item on --

5 MR. ADAMS: Chair, just two very quick things.  
6 We have had a request for an excused absence from  
7 John Fullerton.

8 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay.

9 MS. SPAIN: I'll move it.

10 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Seconded.

11 THE CLERK: Who seconded?

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I did.

13 MR. MENENDEZ: Mr. Rodriguez.

14 THE CLERK: Mr. Menendez?

15 MR. MENENDEZ: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Mr. Ehrenhaft?

17 MR. EHRENHAFT: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Mr. Rodriguez?

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Ms. Rolando?

21 MS. ROLANDO: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Ms. Bache-Wiig.

23 MS. BACHE-WIIG: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: Ms. Spain?

25 MS. SPAIN: Yes.

1 THE CLERK: Mr. Durana?

2 MR. DURANA: Yes.

3 THE CLERK: (Inaudible.)

4 MS. KAUTZ: Warren? I'm sorry, this is Kara.

5 We can't hear Nancy call the role. It's going

6 to be important for the court reporter to hear

7 that. So she needs to speak into a microphone.

8 THE CLERK: Can you hear me now?

9 MS. KAUTZ: Yes.

10 THE CLERK: Okay. Mr. Garcia-Pons? I did not  
11 get an answer from him.

12 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: Thank you.

14 MR. ADAMS: And just very briefly regarding  
15 the upcoming board appointments, the city clerk is  
16 here just to speak for a couple of minutes on these  
17 upcoming appointments. And I believe they will be  
18 scheduled for the May 25th city commission so...

19 MR. URQUIA: Good afternoon, everyone. As  
20 Mr. Adams said, the board appointments will be made  
21 by the city commission during the May 25th city  
22 commission. Any vacancies that remain, the board  
23 members who are currently appointed will continue  
24 to serve until a replacement is appointed.

25 So I'm not sure if there's a board as a whole



1 appointment or a commission as a whole appointment.  
2 Those will be done at a later time. So if someone  
3 is the commission as a whole appointment, or the  
4 board is a whole appointment, you will continue to  
5 serve until a replacement is appointed. Okay.

6 June 1st you will receive financial disclosure  
7 from the city. Financial disclosure is similar to  
8 your taxes; you do it for the previous year. So  
9 please remember that when you get financial  
10 disclosure, it's for 2020.

11 With that said, if you are no longer on the  
12 board come June or come July when a replacement is  
13 appointed and you receive financial disclosure from  
14 our office next year, and you call us and you say,  
15 "I haven't served in over a year, why are you  
16 sending me this," know that it's for the first five  
17 months of this year that you served you will be  
18 asked to complete financial disclosure next June.  
19 Okay?

20 I know you're going to forget about it from  
21 now until next June, but nonetheless...

22 All of you, thank you for your service.

23 Like I said, appointments will be made by the  
24 individual commissioners at the May 25th city  
25 commission meeting, and then further on the board

1 as a whole appointment and the commission as a  
2 whole appointment.

3 Any questions for us?

4 All right. Thank you very much.

5 MS. SPAIN: Billy, someone should send the  
6 commission that portion of the zoning code that  
7 lists the professions that are required because  
8 they get confused.

9 MR. URQUIA: So right now we're going through  
10 each appointment for the specific board that have  
11 requirements. This is not the only one. But, yes,  
12 so we're making sure that those professions are  
13 being checked off.

14 MS. SPAIN: Okay. They just need to know that  
15 if they exist, because otherwise it may slip  
16 through the cracks and then they have three  
17 appointments as a commission as a whole.

18 MR. URQUIA: Yes.

19 MS. SPAIN: Thanks.

20 MR. URQUIA: Thank you.

21 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. So the first case is  
22 Case file LHD 2019-010. Consideration of the  
23 historic designation of the property at 500 Majorca  
24 Avenue, legally described as Lot 12, Block 15,  
25 Coral Gables Section B according to the plat

1           thereof as recorded in Plat Book 5 at Page 111 of  
2           the public records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

3           MR. ADAMS: Can we play the first PowerPoint,  
4           please.

5           (Video played.)

6           MS. GUIN: The property at 500 Majorca Avenue  
7           is before you for consideration for designation as  
8           a local historic landmark. This designation was  
9           requested by the owner.

10           The photo shown here dates to March 1924 as  
11           the home was nearing completion. It's the facade  
12           facing Hernando Street.

13           As per Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral  
14           Gables Zoning Code criteria for designation of  
15           historic landmarks; a local historic landmark must  
16           have significant character, interest, or value as  
17           part of the historical, cultural, archeological,  
18           aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the city,  
19           state, or nation. For designation a property must  
20           meet one of the criteria as outlined in the code.

21           500 Majorca Avenue is eligible as a historic  
22           landmark based on three criteria. Historical  
23           cultural significance, criteria four; it  
24           exemplifies the historical, cultural, political,  
25           economic, or social trends of the community.

1            Architectural significance, criteria one; it  
2            portrays the environment in an era of history  
3            characterized by one or more distinctive  
4            architectural style.

5            And criteria two; it embodies those  
6            distinguishing characteristics of an architectural  
7            style or period or method of construction.

8            500 Majorca Avenue is in the Coral Gables  
9            Section Part B which is a residential single-family  
10           home neighborhood. It sits on a 50-by-113 foot lot  
11           at the southwest corner of Majorca Avenue and  
12           Hernando Street which is located north of the  
13           Granada Golf Course and one block west of Le Jeune  
14           Road.

15           George Merrick founded Coral Gables in the  
16           early 1920s based on his vision for a fully  
17           conceived Mediterranean inspired city. The city's  
18           developmental history is divided into three major  
19           historical periods. During the initial development  
20           period architectural design specifically combined  
21           elements commonly found in Spanish, Moorish, and  
22           Italian architecture, and has come to be known as  
23           the Mediterranean Revival style. During the 1920s  
24           structures and amenities were built almost  
25           exclusively in accordance with this style.

1           The home at 500 Majorca Avenue occurred during  
2           this initial phase and was built by one of  
3           Merrick's sales team leaders.

4           Coral Gables was originally conceived as a  
5           suburb of Miami and attracted investors across the  
6           nation during the South Florida real estate boom of  
7           the 1920s. Merrick drew from the Garden City and  
8           City Beautiful movements of the 19th and early 20th  
9           Century to create his vision for a fully conceived  
10          Mediterranean inspired city which is now considered  
11          one of the first modern planned communities in the  
12          United States.

13          To create his vision Merrick assembled a  
14          development team whose combined expertise shaped  
15          the character of his new city and included experts  
16          in advertising, legal affairs, sales, business, and  
17          professional design staff of artists, architects,  
18          landscape architects, and engineers.

19          Three members of Merrick's original team were  
20          involved in the home at 500 Majorca. Fred C. Evans  
21          became a team sales leader for George Merrick in  
22          late 1922 after leaving his well-established real  
23          estate career in Ohio to move to Miami due to  
24          family health concerns. Notes indicate that Evans  
25          and Merrick had an instant rapport upon meeting.

1           Their professional and personal histories are  
2           strikingly similar.

3           Evans's father passed when he was young, and  
4           as a teen Evans ran the family farm until his  
5           mother's death in 1890. He then moved to Newark,  
6           Ohio and built a multiprong real estate career over  
7           the next 30 years. He became a prominent developer  
8           and promoter and founded construction-oriented  
9           companies.

10           Most notably, he planned the Evansdale Edition  
11           where he subsequently built his own home. Upon his  
12           arrival in Miami, Evans became a sales crew leader  
13           for Merrick's Coral Gables corporation. As early  
14           as December 1922 Evans was a promoted speaker at  
15           Merrick's sales banquets and other galas.

16           In this sales team photo dated to 1923, Evans  
17           is seated in the front row. For the next several  
18           years until the city's incorporation Evans was  
19           cited as invaluable to Merrick in promoting and  
20           selling lots in Coral Gables.

21           In December 1923 Evans acquired lots in  
22           Section B at 430 and 500 Majorca Avenue. Notes  
23           indicate he purchased these lots with the intention  
24           of building upon them in a show of personal support  
25           for Merrick's vision.

1           Nationally acclaimed landscape architect Frank  
2           Button drew the first comprehensive maps of Coral  
3           Gables in 1921 and 1922, one of which is on the  
4           left side in this slide. The initial construction  
5           in Coral Gables was concentrated in Sections A  
6           through D, which were located near Merrick's  
7           plantation in Section A in the direct vicinity of  
8           the Granada Golf Course.

9           As you can see from the plat map of Section B  
10          on the right, Merrick offered both larger lots near  
11          the golf course and smaller lots to the north and  
12          east of the course.

13          Lots in Section B were first offered for sale  
14          on December 27th, 1921. Evans purchased two of the  
15          smaller lots in 1923. There a right arrow shows  
16          the location of 500 Majorca Avenue.

17          Merrick dedicated numerous portions of Coral  
18          Gables for homes that would be affordable by the  
19          middle class. He had his architects design finely  
20          detailed Mediterranean Revival style homes on 50  
21          and 65-foot wide lots to demonstrate that though  
22          smaller, moderately priced homes in Coral Gables  
23          would have the same quality of construction and  
24          aesthetics as the larger homes. These smaller  
25          homes would later be classified as Coral Gables

1 cottages.

2 Both of the homes on Majorca built by Evans  
3 can be classified as cottages. You can see from  
4 these photos of 500 Majorca it aligns with  
5 Merrick's description of them. Notably, a group of  
6 three round arches, the middle slightly higher than  
7 the other two separated by twisted columns so  
8 delicate and right that no other decoration is  
9 necessary, evenly grouped ventilator holes, and the  
10 inconspicuous details such as ironwork, the trim of  
11 the chimney, the curve of the garage roof that are  
12 harmonious styled and architecturally right.

13 In December 1923 Fred Evans purchased the land  
14 at 500 Majorca Avenue from Norbert Hugger and by  
15 early 1924 had a house under construction on the  
16 lot. As indicated by this March 24th article,  
17 Evans was constructing the homes at 430 and 500  
18 Majorca simultaneously. A brief description of the  
19 homes is offered.

20 A detail of note is that the window frames and  
21 the garage doors were blue. It also documents that  
22 the landscape architect, Frank Button, a key member  
23 of Merrick's design team who drew the first maps of  
24 Coral Gables, was landscaping the residence.

25 Permits No. 160 and 161 were issued to 500 and



1           430 Majorca Avenue respectively. These permits  
2           have not been located to date.

3           A January 1926 sales ad seen here cites  
4           architect H. George Fink as the designer of the  
5           home at 430 Majorca Avenue. Fink was a leading  
6           member of Merrick's design team. Staff also  
7           attributes the design of 500 Majorca to Fink.

8           Typically in the 1920s permit numbers were  
9           filed by the architect. The fact that these homes  
10          are issued subsequent permit numbers lends credence  
11          to both homes being designed by the same architect.

12          In addition to the commonalities outlined in  
13          the March 1924 article on the previous slide,  
14          comparison of historic photos demonstrate the  
15          similarity of the prominent sign features of these  
16          two homes, most notably the tower in the adjacent  
17          shed roof configuration, similar wing wall parapet  
18          configurations at the tower, the use of square vent  
19          holes, the same pediment and arch design at the  
20          main entry, as well as similar garage designs.

21          This home was designed in the Mediterranean  
22          Revival style and draws heavily from Spanish  
23          precedence. As will be illustrated in the  
24          following slides, the home exhibits numerous  
25          Mediterranean Revival style character defining

1 features. These include thick cement block walls  
2 covered in covered stucco, rectilinear massing and  
3 floor plan, projecting and recessed planes, a  
4 variety of roof types, including a series of low  
5 pitched roofs covered in two-piece barrel tile,  
6 arched and decorative openings, a prominent and  
7 distinctive chimney, a squat bell tower, and a  
8 molded cornice and sculpted wing walls cascading to  
9 the parapet, roof square vents, recessed casement  
10 windows of various sizes and configuration with  
11 projecting sills, decorative masonry insets,  
12 balcony with a metal railing, twisted columns with  
13 Moorish inspired capitals, wing walls, courtyard  
14 wall with an arched opening and spindled gate.

15 The next few slides will show some details of  
16 the home. Here are the photos of the front facade.  
17 The projecting gable roof bay contains the  
18 tripartite arched fenestration ensemble with  
19 engaged twisted columns and Moorish inspired  
20 capitals. The French door in the middle leads onto  
21 a balcony encircled by a hip height metal railing.  
22 Centered above the middle arch is an applied  
23 masonry medallion. Extending from both corners are  
24 wing walls with the one at the northeast corner  
25 seamlessly incorporated into the front entry.

1           The entry to the home is under a shed roof  
2           along Hernando Street as seen here. The photo on  
3           the right shows how that wing wall is incorporated  
4           into it as well as the entry's gable roof hood  
5           feature. Note the incised pediment over the front  
6           door.

7           The hallmark feature of the home is the squat  
8           bell tower which rises at the junction of the shed  
9           and the flat roofs along the plane of the east  
10          facade.

11          Its hipped roof is perched upon a projecting  
12          mulbit (ph) cornice. The exposed wooden framing of  
13          the roof is visible from the street level as seen  
14          in the photo on the left. The tower's semicircular  
15          arched openings spring from a central engaged  
16          twisted column with Moorish inspired capitals.

17          At the southeast and the northwest corners of  
18          the tower sculpted wing walls gently cascade down  
19          to meet the round capped parapet coping of the  
20          adjacent one story.

21          Also note the incised rectangular panel with  
22          the egg-shaped interior pattern which is located  
23          between the tower and the first story window  
24          ensemble.

25          Here's a full length photo of the east facade.

1           In this photo you can more clearly see how the  
2           tower's wing wall cascades down to the parapet of  
3           the flat roof southern portion of the home.

4           Also note the courtyard wall connecting the  
5           home and the detached garage. The wall arches over  
6           the spindled gate, it meets the wing walls  
7           cascading from the home and the garage.

8           These photos are of the rear facade with its  
9           protruding middle bay. In these photos you can  
10          clearly see the rounded parapet coping and the  
11          texture of the home's stucco.

12          The focal point of the west facade is the  
13          square chimney stack near the northwest corner of  
14          the home which you can glimpse here behind the  
15          vegetation. The face of the protruding stack  
16          aligns with the end of the gable roof covering the  
17          northern portion of the home. The stack is capped  
18          by a barrel tile gable roof.

19          Note the stepping of the parapets on this  
20          facade, as well as the incised rectangular panel  
21          similar but smaller than the one below the tower on  
22          the east facade.

23          The original detached garage is located at the  
24          southeast corner of the property and is accessed by  
25          a randomly-shaped coral rock approach.

1           The one-story one-car garage is under a flat  
2 roof with an exceptionally high parapets that  
3 accommodate its visibility behind the faux gable  
4 roof projection over the vehicular door.

5           The front facade is clad in stucco whose  
6 texture is similar to the main house. The stucco  
7 on the side and the rear facades has considerably  
8 less texture. The photo also shows the courtyard  
9 between the home and the garage. The tile pavers  
10 appear to be original.

11           As demonstrated by these photos in comparison  
12 with other historic photos, the home has retained  
13 substantial historic integrity over the past  
14 97 years. There have been no additions or changes  
15 to the form or the style of the home.

16           Alterations of note include the installation  
17 of the gable hood over the front entry in 1950 by  
18 architect Martin Hauri, the installation of  
19 hurricane impact windows and doors in 2019 where  
20 care was taken to maintain the original casement  
21 and high profile muntin pattern.

22           And at an unknown date the square vent holes  
23 above the windows were enclosed, but they remain  
24 clearly visible today. In a 1937 photo you can see  
25 them as originally designed.

1           Also at an unknown date the configuration of  
2           the vehicular door on the garage was changed and  
3           doors and windows were added to its north and south  
4           facades.

5           Hence, in conclusion, constructed in 1924 the  
6           single family home at 500 Majorca Avenue is amongst  
7           the earliest homes built in the city. It's an  
8           excellent example of the Coral Gables cottage and  
9           the Mediterranean Revival style architecture that  
10          defined founder George Merrick's vision for the  
11          city. The home was built by Fred C. Evans, a sales  
12          leader for Merrick as an investment in support of  
13          his vision. The design of the home is attributed  
14          to architect H. George Fink, an original member of  
15          Merrick's design team.

16          The property at 500 Majorca retains a high  
17          degree of architectural integrity and significantly  
18          contributes to the historic fabric of the City of  
19          Coral Gables, and is part of a collection of  
20          quality buildings that serve as a visible reminder  
21          of the history and the cultural heritage of the  
22          city.

23          Staff recommends approval of the local  
24          historic designation of the property at 500 Majorca  
25          Avenue based on its historical, cultural, and

1 architectural significance.

2 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Is there anyone in the  
3 audience who would like to speak in favor of this  
4 case?

5 MR. ADAMS: I believe the owner of the  
6 property, Anthony Martinez, is on Zoom. I don't  
7 know if he wishes to speak or not.

8 MR. MARTINEZ: Hi. Can you hear me?

9 MR. MENENDEZ: Go ahead.

10 MR. MARTINEZ: So I'd just like to say thank  
11 you for the consideration of this designation. My  
12 wife and I, we love living in this house and being  
13 part of the Coral Gables community.

14 I'd just like to give special recognition to  
15 my aunt and uncle, Ana Alvarez and Frank Martinez  
16 for seeing us through our home's renovation process  
17 in 2019 and preserving and restoring the  
18 historically significant features of our home. I  
19 just wanted to add that in there. So have a great  
20 day.

21 MR. MENENDEZ: Thank you.

22 MS. SPAIN: It's a beautiful home. And I'm  
23 good friends with Ana and Frank. So  
24 congratulations, and I really appreciate you  
25 designating it.

1           MR. ADAMS: We have one letter of support.  
2           Would you like me to read it into the record?

3           MR. MENENDEZ: Go ahead.

4           MR. ADAMS: "On behalf of the Historic  
5           Preservation Association of Coral Gables, please  
6           accept this letter in support of the historic  
7           designation for 500 Majorca Avenue as recommended  
8           by the city's preservation staff and requested by  
9           the owner.

10           This single family residence was constructed  
11           in 1924 and is among the earliest homes built in  
12           the city. Designed by H. George Fink, it is an  
13           excellent example of the Coral Gables cottage and  
14           Merrick's signature Mediterranean Revival style.

15           A cottage property must be no more than one  
16           story in height, constructed prior to 1940, and a  
17           frontage no greater than 65 feet. It retains  
18           unique historic features with minimal alterations,  
19           and its style significantly contributes to the  
20           historic fabric of the city.

21           According to the preservation staff's local  
22           designation report, the almost 100-year-old  
23           property has retained a high degree of historical  
24           integrity. The Historic Preservation Association  
25           of Coral Gables promotes the understanding and the



1 importance of historic resources and their  
2 preservation in Coral Gables.

3 We ask the Historic Preservation Board to  
4 accept the recommendation of the city's  
5 preservation office and approve the local landmark  
6 designation of 500 Majorca Avenue.

7 Sincerely, Dr. Karelia Martinez Carbonell,  
8 President, Historic Preservation Association of  
9 Coral Gables."

10 MS. KAUTZ: Can I remind you all to swear in  
11 the speaker. So probably Mr. Martinez should be  
12 sworn in.

13 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Who does the swearing  
14 in?

15 MS. KAUTZ: The court reporter. She's on.

16 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm here.

17 MR. MENENDEZ: The court reporter.

18 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm here. Good evening.  
19 I just need Mr. Martinez to put his camera on so I  
20 can see him.

21 MR. MARTINEZ: Can you see me?

22 THE COURT REPORTER: Yes, I can.

23 Could you please raise your right hand?

24 Do you swear the testimony you will give will  
25 be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the

1 truth?

2 MR. MARTINEZ: I do.

3 THE COURT REPORTER: Okay.

4 MR. MENENDEZ: Thank you.

5 Okay. Is there anyone in the audience who  
6 would like to speak in opposition of this case?

7 Okay. Well, then I will close the public  
8 hearing portion and open it up for board discussion  
9 or comment.

10 MS. BACHE-WIIG: I'll make a comment.

11 MR. MENENDEZ: Go ahead, Alicia.

12 MS. BACHE-WIIG: I think it's four years I've  
13 been on this board. I think this is one of the  
14 most beautiful homes that have come up in front of  
15 us to designate. I mean, you know, one of the  
16 earliest structures. It's such a beautiful example  
17 of that early, you know, Mediterranean Revival  
18 architecture. And it reminds me of a home that I  
19 grew up in from the '20s in North Gables. And I  
20 just love that this is coming before us.

21 And it's the landscaping, how it's grown  
22 around and in between the home is fantastic. And I  
23 just think that all the new homes coming up now  
24 wishes it could be as masterful and as balanced and  
25 as well composed as this one is. That's it.

1           MR. MENENDEZ:  Would anyone else like to  
2           speak?

3           MS. SPAIN:  I'm just amazed it's so intact.

4           MR. MENENDEZ:  Yeah.

5           MS. SPAIN:  It's amazing.

6           MS. BACHE-WIIG:  Beautiful.

7           MR. EHRENHAFT:  I'd just comment, I think it's  
8           very nice that the staff who wrote the report also  
9           paid attention to Martin Hauri who worked with Fink  
10          and the other core group of architects, but he has  
11          been seen to do additions on houses that were from  
12          the pre-hurricane period, but did a lot of that  
13          work in the 1950s.  And it's nice to see that he's  
14          also recognized for that.

15          MS. BACHE-WIIG:  I have a question.  That bell  
16          tower, is it open on the top, like you can't  
17          experience that from the house, right?  It's just  
18          open up there?

19          MS. SPAIN:  Typically it's not open, but I  
20          don't know about this one.

21          MS. BACHE-WIIG:  It looks open, like there's  
22          no --

23          MR. MENENDEZ:  I think it's lit at night as  
24          well.

25          MS. BACHE-WIIG:  It's lit at night.

1           MR. MARTINEZ: It's lit at night, but you have  
2 to crawl in, essentially you have to crawl in to  
3 access it and to change the light bulb.

4           MS. ROLANDO: Could you repeat that?

5           MR. RODRIGUEZ: I don't think he can hear you,  
6 Peggy. You have to speak right up to the  
7 microphone.

8           MS. ROLANDO: Could the owner repeat what he  
9 just said about access to the tower?

10          MR. MARTINEZ: Sure. So as it stands right  
11 now, there's not really direct access to the tower,  
12 per se. You have to crawl in through the opening  
13 to change the light bulb.

14          MR. RODRIGUEZ: You have to crawl into it.

15          MS. ROLANDO: Oh, thank you.

16          MR. MENENDEZ: Would anyone like to make a  
17 motion?

18          MR. EHRENHAFT: I'd like to move that this  
19 house be historically designated locally.

20          MS. ROLANDO: Second.

21          MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Ms. Rolando seconded it.  
22 Could we get a role call, please.

23          THE CLERK: Mr. Menendez?

24          MR. MENENDEZ: Yes.

25          THE CLERK: Mr. Ehrenhaft?

1 MR. EHRENHAFT: Yes.

2 THE CLERK: Mr. Durana?

3 MR. DURANA: Yes.

4 THE CLERK: Ms. Spain?

5 MS. SPAIN: Yes.

6 THE CLERK: Ms. Bache-Wiig?

7 MS. BACHE-WIIG: Yes.

8 THE CLERK: Ms. Rolando?

9 MS. ROLANDO: Yes.

10 THE CLERK: Mr. Garcia-Pons?

11 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yes.

12 THE CLERK: Mr. Rodriguez?

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

14 THE CLERK: So moved.

15 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Are we ready for the

16 second item?

17 MR. ADAMS: Yes. Can we upload the second

18 PowerPoint, please.

19 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. This is Case File COA

20 (SP) 2021-004, an application for the issuance of a

21 special certificate of appropriateness in

22 accordance with Section 8-104(D)2 of the City of

23 Coral Gables Zoning Code for the public

24 right-of-way adjacent to 2810 Ponce de Leon

25 Boulevard known as Fred B. Hartnett Ponce Circle

1 Park, legally described as all of Block 19, Coral  
2 Gables Craft Section, according to the plat thereof  
3 as recorded in Plat Book 10 at Page 40 of the  
4 public records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

5 The applicant is requesting a recommendation  
6 of approval for an amendment to the city plan for  
7 the alteration of the intersection at Ponce de Leon  
8 Boulevard and Palermo Avenue.

9 MR. ADAMS: Okay. An amendment to the Coral  
10 Gables Zoning Code to allow for the designation of  
11 the city plan as historic was adopted by the city  
12 commission on April 24th, 2018. The code requires  
13 that any material amendments to the city plan shall  
14 be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Board who  
15 will make a recommendation for a special  
16 certificate of appropriateness to the city  
17 commission.

18 The city commission will ultimately reign over  
19 the decision to grant or deny the issuance of the  
20 special COA. Please note each request for an  
21 amendment to the city plan will be reviewed on a  
22 case-by-case basis as is the normal process for any  
23 certificate of appropriateness application.

24 Approval of one amendment by the Historic  
25 Preservation Board will not be used as a precedent

1 or blanket approval for other applications.

2 The application requests a recommendation of  
3 approval to the city commission for an amendment to  
4 the city plan. The full project consists of the  
5 redevelop of Fred B. Hartnett Ponce Circle Park.  
6 The park itself is not historically designated, and  
7 the design of the existing park elements or  
8 features does not have any historic significance.

9 The shape of the park and the adjacent public  
10 right-of-way within the historically designated  
11 city plan should be the focus of the Historic  
12 Preservation Board review.

13 Relevant portions of the project are  
14 summarized in the letter of intent. A unique  
15 aspect of the project is the park's location and a  
16 traffic roundabout boundaried on all sides by  
17 vehicular roadways.

18 One of the main objectives of the project is  
19 to improve pedestrian safety and access. As a  
20 result, the scope of work extends well beyond the  
21 park boundary itself to include the surrounding  
22 streets and sidewalk.

23 The Ponce Circle Park master plan proposes  
24 each roadway and streetscape improvements to  
25 enhance pedestrian access in addition to park

1 improvements.

2           Given that the city street grid has been  
3 designated as historic, the design team made a  
4 conscious decision to preserve the geometry of each  
5 component, the capsule shape of the park, the  
6 U-turns on the north and south, and the triangular  
7 traffic islands.

8           Although each component has grown in large due  
9 to the reduced driving lane width, each has  
10 preserved its existing overall shape.

11           The plan also proposes to maintain the  
12 sweeping curves of the sidewalk way out, again, to  
13 preserve the existing visual geometries as seen  
14 from overhead. For example, although the  
15 intersection of Palermo Avenue and Ponce de Leon  
16 Boulevard southbound has been squared off for  
17 pedestrian safety, a large radius and sweeping lane  
18 of the sidewalks has been preserved.

19           The historic preservation board is tasked with  
20 considering the appropriateness of the amendment to  
21 the city plan while taking into consideration the  
22 historic integrity of the city plan and the affect  
23 of the proposed amendment on the integrity,  
24 development, and the public purpose being served by  
25 the amendment.



1           In 1924 city founder George Merrick proposed  
2           the concept of work space for art designs and  
3           craftsmen and set aside a section of the city south  
4           of the business district for this purpose. The  
5           40-block craft section was boundaried by the major  
6           thoroughfares of Coral Way and San Sebastian Avenue  
7           to its north and south and by Le Jeune Road and  
8           Douglas Road to the east and west.

9           Merrick envisioned either shops with living  
10          space above or affordable homes where craftsmen  
11          could live in close proximity to the adjacent  
12          business district.

13          At the center of this 40-block district was a  
14          large elliptical space set aside as a marketplace  
15          for the craftsmen to display their goods.

16          Unfortunately, due to the economic downturn  
17          this section of the city never came to fruition.  
18          The grand oval was turned into Ponce Circle Park  
19          which was renamed Fred B. Hartnett Ponce Circle  
20          Park, and numerous blocks stood empty for decades.  
21          It was only in the early 1950s that the area  
22          started to substantially developed.

23          No variances have been requested. The Board  
24          of Architects reviewed and approved the overall  
25          master plan on April 15th, 2021. The proposal has

1 not yet been scheduled for review by the planning  
2 and zoning board.

3 Staff conclusion; the proposed alteration to  
4 the intersection of Ponce de Leon Boulevard and  
5 Palermo Avenue minimally impacts the overall design  
6 intent of the historic city plan, and much of the  
7 original plan's integrity at this location will be  
8 retained.

9 The alteration will improve pedestrian and  
10 vehicular safety at this intersection, and the  
11 proposed plans for the park will be a significant  
12 public benefit to city residents.

13 If traffic design standards permit,  
14 consideration should be given to rounding off the  
15 angular appearance of the alteration to provide a  
16 more curvilinear form which is in keeping with the  
17 street pattern at this location.

18 For the remainder of the proposed right-of-way  
19 improvements staff finds that they do not disrupt  
20 or alter the designated street grid in a way that  
21 affects the overall integrity of the historic city  
22 plan.

23 The image on your screen at the moment, I  
24 believe it's page 13 of your documents, this  
25 actually shows the minor amendments that have

1 already been made to the roadways.

2 Historical resources preservation staff  
3 recommends the following: A motion to approve the  
4 request for a recommendation of approval to the  
5 city commission for an amendment to the city plan  
6 for the alteration of the intersection of Ponce de  
7 Leon Boulevard and Palermo Avenue adjacent to 2810  
8 Ponce de Leon Boulevard legally described as all of  
9 Block 19, Coral Gables Craft Section according to  
10 the plat thereof as recorded in Plat Book 10 at  
11 Page 40 of the public records of Miami-Dade County,  
12 Florida, and recommend approval of the issuance of  
13 a special certificate of appropriateness.

14 And I believe Urban Robot, the designers, are  
15 actually online to discuss the proposal more.

16 MR. DECARO: Good afternoon. My name is  
17 Brandon DeCaro. I'm the city's project manager for  
18 this very interesting project.

19 With me today --

20 MR. MENENDEZ: He needs to be sworn in first.

21 MS. VELEZ: Me as well probably.

22 THE COURT REPORTER: Both of you at the same  
23 time, that's fine.

24 MR. DECARO: Okay.

25 THE COURT REPORTER: Do you swear or affirm to

1 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but  
2 the truth?

3 MR. DECARO: I do.

4 MS. VELEZ: I do.

5 MR. DECARO: Okay. With me this afternoon is  
6 Justine Velez from the firm of Urban Robot. We're  
7 very happy to have this opportunity to present this  
8 exciting project to the board.

9 Just a little introduction, two years ago --  
10 just a little over two years ago the city sent out  
11 an RFQ for a design team. Urban Robot competed  
12 against 11 other firms and was selected by a group  
13 of professional staff and community members as the  
14 best firm to move forward with this project.

15 The contract was negotiated and the notice to  
16 proceed was issued in November of 2019. The  
17 project has already been presented to the park's  
18 advisory board, the landscape beautification board,  
19 and the board of architects approved the master  
20 plan in Phase 1.

21 Urban Robot is a local firm. They're located  
22 on Miami Beach, and it's been a real pleasure  
23 working with them.

24 Now I'd like to introduce Justine Velez.

25 MS. VELEZ: Good afternoon and thank you,

1           Brandon. We are thrilled to be your landscape  
2           architects for Ponce Circle Park.

3                     I would like to ask quickly, how many minutes  
4           should I assume that I have for the presentation.

5           MR. ADAMS: Do you need to be sworn in?

6           MS. VELEZ: I was.

7                     Let's assume maybe ten minutes. So I'll share  
8           my screen.

9           MR. ADAMS: I think you need to be sworn in.

10          MS. VELEZ: I believe I was.

11          MR. ADAMS: You were?

12          MS. KAUTZ: Yes.

13          THE COURT REPORTER: She was.

14          MS. VELEZ: Great. So as was mentioned in the  
15          very thorough introduction, the project scope is to  
16          design the park but also to design the roadways  
17          around the park. And so I will sort of fly by some  
18          slides which were prepared for other boards and  
19          general information in order to remain succinct.

20                     And so this is a site map, a conceptual map  
21          just demonstrating that the park site is within  
22          walking distance of Miracle Mile, and also  
23          demonstrating that we have a burgeoning population  
24          of residential hospitality, you know, visitors, and  
25          commercial uses that is springing up on the south

1 and east side of the site in the plaza on Ponce  
2 Development.

3 So this is a neighborhood that's going to get  
4 increasing use, and the fact that the current park  
5 is difficult to access and unsafe to access for  
6 pedestrians crossing the road is one of the major  
7 reasons why we were brought on board to re-design  
8 the park.

9 We began with a survey in 2019 of the  
10 community to find out what were the main  
11 objectivities of the community and business members  
12 in the adjacent areas, and the overwhelming  
13 feedback was for shade as well as seating and room  
14 for a farmer's market. And so these are  
15 touchstones throughout the design process.

16 And as I mentioned, because it is a unique  
17 park sided completely by the roadways, our purview  
18 is to -- our scope of work is to address everything  
19 around the property including sidewalks and  
20 roadways to try to improve the pedestrian access.  
21 So this pink line is demonstrating that.

22 And something that was referred to in the  
23 introduction is the fact that the city grid or the  
24 city plan has been designated historic, and that's  
25 really been one of our other major touchstones of

1 the project, something that we always go back to  
2 over and over again as we're designing the project.

3 And so this is a great aerial just  
4 demonstrating the existing street condition where  
5 on the northwest we have this sort of corner here  
6 and this kind of radius here, but on the southwest,  
7 which is really the main focus of what we're asking  
8 you to approve today, we have a very wide radius  
9 and creating a difficult crossing situation for  
10 pedestrians trying to get to the park, and also in  
11 general causing visibility issues and a tendency on  
12 the part of vehicular drivers to be focusing on the  
13 cars coming and not on the pedestrians trying to  
14 cross. So that's something that we'll be getting  
15 back to.

16 These are just general aerial -- excuse me --  
17 general site photos to demonstrate the existing  
18 condition of Ponce Circle Park. All of the  
19 structures that you see are not disturbed. They've  
20 been evaluated to not be historically significant.

21 This is a diagram just demonstrating what is  
22 historically significant and designated in the  
23 immediately adjacent area, our site here. As you  
24 probably know, this historic building here is being  
25 preserved by Agave and Ponce Development.

1           And referring back to something that was  
2 already explained, we are in the Crafts District,  
3 but the site use has changed quite a bit.

4           So the pink is really showing where the  
5 existing curbs or edge of roadway or edge asphalt  
6 are today, and what we are proposing to do is to  
7 narrow the travel lanes. One of the major reasons  
8 why we want to narrow the travel lanes is because  
9 it's been proven to reduce vehicular speed, and,  
10 therefore, improve pedestrian safety and vehicular  
11 safety, as the case may be.

12           And so what that does is it enlarges the park  
13 space as well as the traffic island. So the teal  
14 or blue color is showing our proposed roadways.  
15 What we have made sure to do is work with the civil  
16 engineers to not only ensure proper roadway  
17 geometry, but also to preserve as much of the  
18 geometry of the historically designated street plan  
19 as possible, so our ellipse or capsule-shaped park  
20 remains the same shape, it just is enlarged. The  
21 same with the traffic triangle.

22           On this southwest corner plan north -- excuse  
23 me -- north is now to the right of the plan. You  
24 can see here the proposed blue curved line has  
25 enlarged the sidewalk. And what that does is it



1 significantly reduces the crossing distance for  
2 pedestrians from about 30 -- excuse me -- from  
3 about 77 feet to about 30 feet, so it's a lot safer  
4 to cross here. And it will end up looking very  
5 similar to other streetscape corners on the  
6 northwest and the northeast.

7 Let's see -- sorry, a little glitch there.

8 So this is just demonstrating the radiuses so  
9 that everyone can have them numbered to understand.  
10 Basically this radius here, 225, we're measuring  
11 this one here, that's existing. This is existing  
12 to remain at 216. And we would be proposing to do  
13 something similar at 175.

14 This is a diagram demonstrating the  
15 non-historical significance of existing  
16 architectural elements in the park, which was  
17 already referred to in the introduction, so I'll  
18 just slide passed.

19 I realize that according to the memorandum  
20 that was issued, the park design itself is not  
21 really being evaluated today, but just quickly, I  
22 think it probably makes sense to introduce the  
23 board to the design which does preserve this large  
24 event space in the center, and really emphasizes  
25 shade primarily through two elements, which is an

1 architectural pergola here on the north and tree  
2 lined paths around the perimeter allowing a second  
3 circulation system that will be very shady, as well  
4 as a lot of wonderful seating niches for different  
5 group gatherings in the shade also. Very important  
6 in Florida.

7 These are just more detailed plans itemizing  
8 each element of the master plan of the park. We  
9 produced 3D renderings. They are conceptual in  
10 nature, the design of the pergola and a lot of  
11 other things to still be worked on. We are in the  
12 schematic master plan phase.

13 Here, though, just I want to point out, that  
14 there will be an Art in Public Place element that  
15 will keep to scale to the city's program to be  
16 determined, so that's just a placeholder sculpture.

17 The planting design we have taken very  
18 seriously because we believe that it's a way of  
19 setting apart the project from other parks and  
20 really making this the landmark destination that  
21 the city has requested it to be, and so we've  
22 developed something called the rainbow ring, and  
23 we've emphasized and done a lot of research into  
24 the seasonality of different locally blooming  
25 trees. And so we have what we think is a really

1           fantastic palette, which we could go into more if  
2           there's any questions about that, as well as a lot  
3           of native trees, of course, to form a core planting  
4           palette.

5                     We have developed a shrub planting plan.  
6           Again, I don't want to linger on these elements too  
7           much.

8                     This is a hardscape plan. It is preliminary.  
9           We are in schematic design, but we've been looking  
10          at things like how to make sure that the lawn is --  
11          has a long life and things like that.

12                    So one of the things that I mentioned is that  
13          there will be this beautiful architectural pergola.  
14          Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. There's many  
15          different styles that we can follow, so we prepared  
16          these boards to share it with city staff and with  
17          the board to garner opinions, especially from the  
18          Board of Architects, and we'll be working through  
19          those elements as the project continues into the  
20          design development phase, hopefully with your  
21          approval and the approval of all the other boards.

22                    These photographs are just showing the fact  
23          that we will be relying heavily on very beautiful  
24          visually important -- visually significant paving  
25          patterns and ballers and other things that will

1 help pedestrians and vehicles operate in the same  
2 space without hurting each other. So we are just  
3 sort of documenting all the different hypologies  
4 (ph) and safety mechanisms that we can be looking  
5 at, it's very preliminary, site lighting plan,  
6 lighting selections.

7 And then the other element we'll be looking at  
8 is what those seating niches that I was referring  
9 to earlier will look like. There's a lot of  
10 different options. They can be sculptural. They  
11 can be built in. They can be comprised of  
12 retaining walls. So basically we've created a menu  
13 of things to be able to work with city staff and  
14 this board to develop that into design development.  
15 So that's what these are about.

16 A cross section. So this cross section is  
17 going east/west looking directly north, and  
18 basically, what we're showing are narrowed  
19 roadways, enhanced sidewalk conditions by having a  
20 double row of trees ensuring shaded sidewalks on  
21 both sides, and also the curbless condition.  
22 Zooming in here to that area on the east side,  
23 we're showing the curbless condition.

24 We are proposing to gather the storm water  
25 that washes off the road into an underdrain system

1           that will hold the rain garden, and working with  
2           our civil engineer to ensure that that drains well.

3                   And as was referred to by Brandon very  
4           briefly, the project will be constructed in two  
5           phases. This is the master plan overall. And then  
6           the pink area shown is the area of intervention for  
7           Phase 1.

8                   So in Phase 1 what we would do is build this  
9           bump-out, and we would build the streetscape and  
10          the roadways, and as well as the outer rings, the  
11          rainbow ring of the park. And so what that Phase 1  
12          would look like is this.

13                   The rest of the documents in this presentation  
14          are technical civil engineering type documents, so  
15          what I'd like to do is, I guess, stop here because  
16          I think this is a good place to show that the red  
17          line indicates the existing lane markings and the  
18          same curb, which is good way for the board here  
19          today to see the enlargement that we are proposing  
20          and the squaring off of this portion of the  
21          roadways.

22                   So with that, thank you very much for your  
23          attention, and I'm happy to answer any questions  
24          you may have.

25                   Was everyone able to hear the presentation

1 well, I hope?

2 MS. KAUTZ: I'm sorry, no one on Zoom -- there  
3 you go -- can hear the chamber. I'm sorry.

4 MS. VELEZ: So I have concluded my  
5 presentation, and I'm open to questions.

6 MR. IGLESIAS: Okay. Thank you very much.  
7 Again, thank you for allowing me to address  
8 the board.

9 We are phasing the project in two phases. One  
10 is, one of the problems that we have with the park  
11 is that there's so much asphalt and it's so  
12 difficult to get to that people are not using it.  
13 We have to remember that this is really kind of a  
14 mini Central Park, and we are actually assessing  
15 impact fees on commercial projects now. So we need  
16 to do something in the Central Business District.

17 In addition to that, we have -- prior to COVID  
18 we had 1.25 million people use our free trolley  
19 service. So you can access this park within eight  
20 or nine minutes throughout most of the Central  
21 Business District. The problem that we've had is  
22 it's so much asphalt and so difficult to get to  
23 with parking and asphalt and so forth, it's  
24 actually dangerous to get there, and so the first  
25 phase we thought was, instead of doing the inside

1 of the park is to bring the park to the people, and  
2 do all the civil work so that -- I think Phase B  
3 will probably sell itself after we do Phase A.

4 So the idea was to slow down the traffic,  
5 create a situation where you seem to be driving  
6 through the park and address the -- we've expanded  
7 the park slightly, and then put that perimeter  
8 landscaping in, and that will be Phase A.

9 And in addition to that, we have a \$2 million  
10 proffer from Agave to do this work. So  
11 specifically for -- that's in addition to the park  
12 fee specifically for Ponce Circle Park. So  
13 hopefully we finish Phase A, and then I think that  
14 if we make the park accessible, I think we will  
15 have a successful park, and I think Phase B will  
16 kind of sell itself. So that's the concept that we  
17 have, and this is really civil, and then the  
18 perimeter, as you saw, and some of the perspectives  
19 that were provided by the consultant. This is the  
20 idea.

21 So I think we've kept the general geometry of  
22 the park, slightly expanded it, and then made it  
23 kind of an attractive place to go.

24 So I'll be happy to answer any other questions  
25 that the board might have.

1           MR. MENENDEZ: This specifically is for  
2 Palermo. So are there going to be additional  
3 phases where additional streets will be impacted?

4           MR. IGLESIAS: No. No. This is the civil  
5 part. This is the impact to the civil side.

6           The Phase B will be the interior part of the  
7 park, some of the structures, shade structures, and  
8 seating and so forth.

9           MR. MENENDEZ: I understand.

10          MR. IGLESIAS: This is the exterior, the civil  
11 engineering portion of the park, and the perimeter,  
12 as they said, that perimeter landscaping. And then  
13 Phase 2 will be the interior shade structures and  
14 all the interior structures.

15          MR. MENENDEZ: So only Palermo is affected  
16 then, not any of the --

17          MS. SPAIN: I have a question about that. And  
18 I want to preface that by saying I think this is  
19 fine. I don't have any issue with it. I  
20 particularly appreciate that there's no closing of  
21 roads involved in that and the configuration is the  
22 same. I think it's a really well worked out  
23 solution for a very difficult area, because it is  
24 impossible to get to the park.

25          But my question is on Sevilla Avenue and on



1 the northwest side of that park where Ponce and  
2 Sevilla meet, I think that's already been altered;  
3 is that right? My recollection is that they've  
4 already done alterations to that that are  
5 similar to what's being done to Palermo.

6 MR. ADAMS: Yes. I believe that has been  
7 altered from the original --

8 MS. SPAIN: That has been. And did that come  
9 to this board?

10 MR. IGLESIAS: What you see here is the way it  
11 is now so --

12 MS. SPAIN: It is. But that was recently  
13 altered, right? I believe so, Peter. And I don't  
14 remember that coming to this board. I mean, I  
15 think it's fine, I think it looks fine, but I don't  
16 believe it came to this board, but I could be  
17 totally wrong.

18 MR. IGLESIAS: I don't -- it probably was.  
19 I'm sure it was. I don't recall. It was not done  
20 while I was -- while I've been here. I'm on my  
21 second trial. But not that I recall. But this  
22 will hopefully reduce --

23 MS. SPAIN: But you're not changing that from  
24 what we see here on Sevilla?

25 MR. IGLESIAS: No. What you see is -- what

1 we're doing is really trying to reduce --

2 MS. SPAIN: I got it --

3 MR. IGLESIAS: -- and then slow the traffic as  
4 they're going through the park. We will be asking  
5 Agave to remove their parking on the Agave side,  
6 remove all parking in that area.

7 MS. SPAIN: That backs out into it, right?

8 MR. IGLESIAS: On the east side, remove all  
9 that parking. I know they did it, but it doesn't  
10 work out with our plan and it's our right-of-way.  
11 And then we will be providing some trolley stops on  
12 both sides.

13 But the idea is as you walk around this area  
14 you become part of the park. Instead of being  
15 isolated by the park --

16 MS. SPAIN: I know. I think it works.

17 MR. IGLESIAS: -- become part of the park.

18 MS. SPAIN: I think it works.

19 And I just have a comment to the architects  
20 involved in this. On one of your pages you have a  
21 historic drawing that you showed of the Craft  
22 Section, and on the paper that we have it says  
23 "prepared by Dover Cole & Partners." Pretty sure  
24 it wasn't. So you might want to, before that hits  
25 the planning and zoning board and the city

1 commission --

2 (Simultaneous voices speaking.)

3 MS. SPAIN: I worked for Dover & Cole, and I'm  
4 not that old.

5 MR. IGLESIAS: This was used by Dover Cole --

6 MS. SPAIN: Exactly.

7 MR. IGLESIAS: -- used on one of their  
8 presentations, but, no, I don't think that was done  
9 by Dover Cole. Thank you.

10 MS. SPAIN: Okay.

11 MR. IGLESIAS: We'll correct that.

12 MS. SPAIN: I think it works really well, and  
13 I applaud your efforts.

14 MR. IGLESIAS: I think it's nice to get this  
15 park back into --

16 MS. SPAIN: It's a long time coming. It's  
17 really a long -- all the events that the city had  
18 there, unless it was an overcast day or in the  
19 wintertime, it's unbearable.

20 MR. IGLESIAS: And it's difficult because we  
21 really need to make the park accessible first and  
22 then do the interior of that park, and I think it  
23 would sell itself. I think Phase B of this project  
24 will sell itself.

25 MR. ADAMS: And if you look at drawing L-002D,

1           that is the drawing that actually shows the  
2           alterations to the street. The pink is existing  
3           and the green is the proposed.

4           MS. BACHE-WIIG: What page? What sheet?

5           MS. SPAIN: I got it. 002E?

6           MR. IGLESIAS: The additional green areas and  
7           the additional areas are to slow down traffic, to  
8           get traffic to slow down in this park and make it a  
9           better experience for our residents and those who  
10          work in the Central Business District.

11          MS. BACHE-WIIG: I think also a couple things,  
12          I think the columns, like marking like a gateway,  
13          you're coming into this park both on the south and  
14          on the north is fabulous, because it really helps  
15          to identify, hey, the park is starting and you're  
16          entering that park now, and it's a traffic calming,  
17          you know, device. So it has a lot of -- it  
18          provides a lot of solutions for things, definitely  
19          closing up that Palermo side. Really important  
20          because you're like 100 feet or 77 feet or  
21          something that you're walking. So I think this is  
22          great.

23          And I also wanted to, just as a side note,  
24          this, you know, trellis structure just reminds me  
25          of the Country Club Prado entrance, and I think

1           it's a great nod like, we see you, you know, this  
2           is -- we're recognizing that, that history, and  
3           bringing it here to this park. I mean, it's  
4           fantastic.

5           I'm just wondering and just curious, the  
6           structure was put on the north side rather than the  
7           south side, just because? Just wondering.

8           MR. IGLESIAS: It's a design feature.

9           MS. BACHE-WIIG: It's a design feature, yeah.

10          MR. IGLESIAS: I will let the architects deal  
11          with that one.

12          MS. BACHE-WIIG: Okay.

13          MR. IGLESIAS: I deal with the concrete.

14          MR. EHRENHAFT: Through the chair, I'm sorry,  
15          I'm still confused because the report refers to  
16          alterations to just the intersection of Ponce de  
17          Leon and Palermo. At this point, the Agave project  
18          has Palermo on the east side blocked. It pierces  
19          and will drive through under a bridge between two  
20          of their buildings. But when they're talking about  
21          alterations to the intersection itself, I mean,  
22          we're discussing all these wonderful things that  
23          have to do with the overall packet, and I think  
24          it's great, you know. But from what I read --

25          MS. VELEZ: I may be able to alleviate some of

1           that confusion by zooming in a little bit, which  
2           I've done. I'm not sure if you're able to see the  
3           screen still.

4           But essentially the pink is the existing curb  
5           and this is the intersection of Palermo. And then  
6           the blue is the proposed curb.

7           MR. EHRENHAFT: I'm sorry, we cannot hear you  
8           clearly. Can you speak --

9           MR. IGLESIAS: What she's saying is what you  
10          see in pink is existing. What you see in green is  
11          proposed. So we are expanding the park creating  
12          those areas on Sevilla and Palermo on the west  
13          side. And then we're expanding the two islands on  
14          either end.

15          The idea is the columns and pavers on these  
16          elements is to slow down traffic and to get to the  
17          park.

18          MR. EHRENHAFT: So on the southwest side of  
19          the intersection between Palermo and Ponce, you're  
20          talking about the green which bumps out and --

21          MR. IGLESIAS: Reduces asphalt.

22          MR. EHRENHAFT: -- reduces asphalt there, and  
23          probably then makes the crossing from --

24          MR. IGLESIAS: Shorter --

25          MR. EHRENHAFT: -- there. They're just going

1 to have to cross a lane.

2 MR. IGLESIAS: Correct. Correct.

3 It's just a tremendous amount of asphalt that  
4 we have here. It's really making the park  
5 unreachable as far as the residents or very  
6 difficult or sometimes unsafe, really.

7 MR. EHRENHAFT: I understand.

8 I just want to make sure that if we're tasked  
9 with approving that, that what we're deciding today  
10 is not misinterpreted as giving this board's  
11 recommendations about anything else that's going on  
12 in the project.

13 MR. IGLESIAS: Correct. What we're looking at  
14 is the red existing, green is actually proposed.  
15 And we've shown you the entire project because we  
16 want you all to know we're excited about it and  
17 we're finally getting this park, and this will be  
18 Phase A. And you've also seen Phase B of the  
19 project.

20 MR. EHRENHAFT: But, Mr. Iglesias, I  
21 understand that. But you have indicated, or the  
22 architect has indicated, on these drawings that we  
23 have before us the existing road lines in the pink,  
24 and the teal are changes everywhere for the entire  
25 ellipse. But we're being tasked with only Palermo

1 where it touches Ponce in this meeting according to  
2 this staff report --

3 MS. SPAIN: That's right. That's what the  
4 staff report says.

5 MR. IGLESIAS: The intent here is to look  
6 at -- is to approve the green and that's --

7 MR. EHRENHAFT: For the entirety of the  
8 project?

9 MR. IGLESIAS: For the entire project.

10 MR. EHRENHAFT: Okay. Well, then that needs  
11 to be made clear on the record, because it isn't.  
12 This is the staff report we're --

13 MR. IGLESIAS: Let's make it clear. What  
14 we're bringing to you is the green. And, of  
15 course, the intent is to make the park larger,  
16 reduce the asphalt, and also we are removing the  
17 Agave parking that's on the east. That's going to  
18 go.

19 And my understanding is that Regions Bank,  
20 because of our work, probably will be redoing their  
21 area in front of the bank, which is great. Because  
22 once -- the hope is that Agave's there, Region's  
23 does their part, and we do our part, and we create  
24 this whole park atmosphere.

25 So even as you're walking around the park,



1           you're looking at the park, you're making the park  
2           accessible, you're removing cars that are blocking  
3           the view, and you create -- and slow down traffic  
4           and create a different environment around this  
5           park, especially with the fact we have a trolley  
6           going by every eight or nine minutes.

7           MS. SPAIN: Great.

8           MR. EHRENHAFT: And one other clarification  
9           then with the restrictions. You've moved the park  
10          boundaries and the hardscape. You've reduced it by  
11          expanding the park.

12          Are the lanes that go circularly around the  
13          oval then going to be one lane?

14          MR. IGLESIAS: No. No. They're two lanes,  
15          but they're going to be reduced. That column  
16          effect, that effect, the change in the texture of  
17          the asphalt and the lane reduction, the idea is to  
18          slow down the traffic as you go around the park.

19          MR. EHRENHAFT: It's still going to be two  
20          lanes, correct?

21          MR. IGLESIAS: Two lanes. Two lanes. It will  
22          be two lanes, but the lanes will be reduced between  
23          the pavers, the column section, and all that as  
24          you're driving through. The idea is to reduce the  
25          speed around the park and create kind of a driving

1 in to the park atmosphere.

2 So if we can reduce the speed, take the cars  
3 away from that area, open up the sidewalk, we're  
4 really going to create an overall park atmosphere  
5 that will be very conducive to the uses of the  
6 park, and that's the idea.

7 MR. EHRENHAFT: Is there a possibility for  
8 that zone, like for a school zone, that it could  
9 get posted to reduce the speed to 15 miles an hour  
10 going through this?

11 MR. IGLESIAS: Very difficult. I'm not going  
12 to tell you -- it's very difficult to do that. We  
13 are working now on park zones, and we're trying to  
14 work with Dade County on that. Commissioner Forest  
15 brought that up at the prior agenda. It's very  
16 difficult because we have to get county approval to  
17 do that.

18 So we can't just -- all signalization, all  
19 markings, everything else needs county approval.  
20 The only thing we can put out is parking signs and  
21 that's it.

22 So we will be working to try to slow it down  
23 as much as possible. I'm not sure if we're going  
24 to be able to get 15 miles an hour, but we'd like  
25 to slow it down to maybe 25.

1           MR. MENENDEZ: Ms. Rolando, you had a  
2 question?

3           MS. ROLANDO: Yes. Can you tell me how many  
4 parking spaces are going to be eliminated? I think  
5 the property owners and tenants in the area,  
6 especially on the west side, may be concerned about  
7 that. And I'd like to know how the parking is --  
8 Ponce street parking is going to be altered.

9           MR. IGLESIAS: Okay. Agave will lose some  
10 parking in front of their building, but they've got  
11 2,000 cars.

12          MS. ROLANDO: Yeah, I'm not worried about the  
13 Agave. I'm talking about to the north of the  
14 park -- basically around the park other than the  
15 Agave property.

16          MR. IGLESIAS: We will be losing some parking  
17 on some of these areas, especially on the -- there  
18 will be some loss of parking on the southwest side  
19 and the northeast side, because we're trying to  
20 reduce that huge amount of asphalt. But we've  
21 looked at that with our parking director, and we're  
22 trying to minimize that effort, but some of the  
23 parking -- some of the asphalt areas are just too  
24 large --

25          MS. ROLANDO: I totally get that. But if

1           you're a tenant or a property owner there, you  
2           already have concerns about parking, so I'm  
3           wondering how many parking spaces are we going to  
4           lose, and --

5           MS. VELEZ: I'll have to get back to you --

6           MS. ROLANDO: -- to reduce the asphalt, but if  
7           I'm a property owner or a tenant, I want to know  
8           where my visitors and customers are going to park.

9           MR. IGLESIAS: I understand. I will let the  
10          architect provide that answer, but we're working  
11          with that also. However, there are some areas that  
12          will have -- we will have a few spots lost, but if  
13          you look at the majority of the areas, the parking  
14          is staying, except for I mentioned the Agave area  
15          because that's right in front of the park.

16          And what we would have is trolley stops in  
17          front of Regions and trolley stops in the Agave,  
18          the Agave site.

19          MS. ROLANDO: So we don't know, or are we  
20          saying there's four or five?

21          MR. IGLESIAS: I can't give you that number  
22          right now. I cannot give you that number right  
23          now.

24          MS. ROLANDO: Okay. So when will we know?

25          MR. MENENDEZ: Can the architect let us know?

1           MR. IGLESIAS: Why don't we just ask the  
2 architect and see if they can tell us.

3           MS. ROLANDO: That would be helpful.

4           MR. IGLESIAS: Because they're on. I'd like  
5 to see if they can answer --

6           MS. VELEZ: Hi. This is Justine. Can people  
7 hear me?

8           MR. MENENDEZ: Yes.

9           MS. VELEZ: Okay. Great.

10           So we're actually -- I can't give you an exact  
11 number, although I can follow up with an e-mail  
12 tomorrow to give you the exact number. But we are  
13 losing very few spots, very few.

14           What we're doing is we are rectifying the  
15 parking so that instead of having say a 15-foot  
16 wide parking spot, we have the more traditional  
17 eight to nine-foot wide parking spot.

18           So with the exception of the very newly  
19 introduced parking right in front of Agave and  
20 Ponce, which we've already mentioned it's getting  
21 eliminated, we might be only losing a few spots. I  
22 can confirm with an exact number tomorrow.

23           MR. IGLESIAS: If you look at the overall  
24 parking plan, on the east and the north and south  
25 side we're not losing that many cars. The most

1 affected is Agave, which is not really a problem  
2 for them.

3 MR. MENENDEZ: Mr. Durana, any questions?

4 MR. DURANA: No. I'm fine.

5 MR. MENENDEZ: Mr. Rodriguez?

6 MR. RODRIGUEZ: None. Thank you.

7 MS. SPAIN: I have a comment. I'm sorry.

8 But, you know, getting back to Bruce's issue with  
9 what we're voting on, I really don't think that  
10 anything other than the intersection that they have  
11 in the staff reports affects the grid of the city.  
12 I mean, I may be wrong on that, but it seems to me  
13 the configuration stays the same, so I think that's  
14 why the report was written that way.

15 MR. ADAMS: Yeah. And if you look at the  
16 staff conclusion, it says for the remainder of the  
17 proposed right-of-way improvements staff finds they  
18 do not disrupt or alter the designated street grid  
19 in a way that affects the overall integrity of the  
20 historic city plan. So they have been taking --

21 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. I would just like you to  
22 clarify exactly what we will be voting on so that  
23 everyone here is clear.

24 MR. ADAMS: If you look at Drawing L-002D.

25 MR. MENENDEZ: D as in dog?

1           MR. ADAMS: Yes. Pink is existing and green  
2           are the proposed minor changes that you are being  
3           asked to review and recommend approval of.

4           MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Because that does not  
5           jive with what's written here.

6           MS. BACHE-WIIG: I think to Dona, what Dona  
7           was trying to say, was that the only significant  
8           change was really the Palermo, which they did  
9           mention in the report, and then they're just  
10          expanding the shape or the configuration.

11          MR. MENENDEZ: I understand that, but again,  
12          it should have said that rather than just  
13          specifically put Palermo and Ponce.

14          MS. SPAIN: I think it did.

15          MR. ADAMS: It does also say the Ponce Circle  
16          Park master plan proposes eight roadway and  
17          streetscape improvements to enhance pedestrian  
18          access so --

19          MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. So everybody's clear,  
20          correct, Bruce?

21          MR. EHRENHAFT: I'm good. I'm good.

22          MR. ADAMS: And just to let you know, we do  
23          have one letter here. Would you like me to read it  
24          into the record?

25          MR. MENENDEZ: Is that from -- well, let me go

1 through my -- anyone who would like to speak in  
2 favor of the project?

3 Is your letter in favor of the project?

4 MR. ADAMS: Partially, I believe.

5 MR. MENENDEZ: Partially. Okay.

6 MR. ADAMS: "On behalf of the Historic  
7 Preservation Board Association of Coral Gables,  
8 please accept this letter in support of the --  
9 sorry. Wrong one. Too many letters.

10 "On behalf of the Historic Preservation Board  
11 Association of Coral Gables, please accept this  
12 letter as a recommendation to maintain the original  
13 symmetry of the Ponce Circle Park design due to its  
14 designation as a local landmark under the city  
15 master plan.

16 The proposal makes note that the existing  
17 fountain, decorative walls, and column monuments  
18 are not historic because they were added in the  
19 1970s, however, age should not disqualify a feature  
20 if indeed it is part of the modern history of the  
21 park, as it is also known as Fred B. Hartnett Ponce  
22 Circle Park dedicated to one of the most beloved  
23 names to serve the people of Coral Gables.

24 The Historic Preservation Association of Coral  
25 Gables promotes the understanding and the



1 importance of historic resources and their  
2 preservation in Coral Gables.

3 We ask the Board of Architects to reject any  
4 new design and maintain the original historical  
5 integrity of the property by restoring, not  
6 removing, any features of the original plan.

7 Karelia Martinez Carbonell, President,  
8 Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables."

9 And just for clarification, you're not  
10 reviewing any changes to the park at the moment,  
11 which is not designated as historic. You're  
12 reviewing the proposed changes to the street way  
13 out only.

14 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Is there anyone who  
15 would like to speak in opposition of this case?

16 No one. Okay. I will close the public  
17 hearing portion.

18 I think that these changes are great and it's  
19 going to make the park really usable. I wish there  
20 was some water feature attached to it, I think that  
21 would have been nice, but I see that --

22 MS. SPAIN: They discussed that.

23 MR. MENENDEZ: So I'm looking forward to  
24 having it finished.

25 Any other comments? Questions from board

1 members? Would anybody like to make a motion?

2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, I'll move that we  
3 approve the recommendation of the staff.

4 MS. SPAIN: I'll second it.

5 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Mr. Rodriguez and  
6 Ms. Spain.

7 THE CLERK: Okay. The role call?

8 MR. MENENDEZ: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: Mr. Rodriguez?

10 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

11 THE CLERK: Ms. Rolando?

12 MS. ROLANDO: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: Ms. Spain?

14 MS. SPAIN: Yes.

15 THE CLERK: Ms. Bache-Wiig?

16 MS. BACHE-WIIG: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Mr. Durana?

18 MR. DURANA: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: Mr. Garcia-Pons?

20 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yes.

21 THE CLERK: Mr. Ehrenhaft?

22 MR. EHRENHAFT: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Menendez?

24 MR. MENENDEZ: Yes.

25 THE CLERK: So moved.

1 MR. IGLESIAS: Thank you very much. Thank  
2 you --

3 MS. SPAIN: Long time coming, Peter.

4 MR. IGLESIAS: I'm sorry?

5 MS. SPAIN: It's a long coming.

6 MR. IGLESIAS: Finally. Finally. Yes.

7 Thank you very much. Thank you.

8 MS. BACHE-WIIG: Thank you. Thank you for  
9 doing this.

10 MS. VELEZ: Thank you.

11 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Any board items? Any  
12 commission or project updates?

13 MR. ADAMS: No.

14 MR. MENENDEZ: No. Okay. Any other items of  
15 discussion? Old business? New business?

16 Okay.

17 MS. KAUTZ: Warren -- I'm sorry, Warren. Do  
18 you want to talk to them about after June 14th?

19 MR. ADAMS: For the --

20 MS. KAUTZ: For the board meeting, please.

21 MR. ADAMS: Oh, yeah. After June 14th all  
22 board meetings will be in person, and I should have  
23 brought the document with me.

24 And, Kara, do you have the document with you  
25 that you can mention the most salient points?

1 MS. KAUTZ: I don't have it with me, but  
2 essentially it's -- and, Gus, you can chime in on  
3 this too, if you know more -- but the boards will  
4 be required to meet in person, no Zoom option for  
5 participating. Applicants will meet in person.  
6 The only people on Zoom will be anyone who wants to  
7 provide comment on any item, but they will not be  
8 the participants.

9 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay.

10 MR. EHRENHAFT: And we'll continue on the  
11 third Wednesdays; is that correct?

12 MS. KAUTZ: Yes.

13 MR. ADAMS: Yes.

14 MR. MENENDEZ: Great. So we're getting back  
15 to normal?

16 MR. ADAMS: Yep.

17 MR. MENENDEZ: Okay. Do I have a motion to  
18 adjourn?

19 MR. DURANA: Yes.

20 MR. MENENDEZ: Mr. Durana.

21 Do I have a second?

22 MR. EHRENHAFT: I'll second.

23 MR. MENENDEZ: Mr. Ehrenhaft.

24 We're adjourned.

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF PALM BEACH

I, Jessica A. Donnelly, Florida Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Florida at large, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and did report said Historic Preservation Board meeting in stenotype; and that the foregoing pages, numbered from 1 to 68, inclusive, are a true and correct transcription of my shorthand notes of said Historic Preservation Board meeting.

I further certify that said Historic Preservation Board meeting was taken at the time and place hereinabove set forth and that the taking of said Historic Preservation Board meeting was commenced and completed as hereinabove set out.

I further certify that I am not an attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel of party connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

The foregoing certification of this transcript does not apply to any reproduction of the same by any means unless under the direct control and/or direction of the certifying reporter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 13th day of June, 2021.

*Jessica A. Donnelly*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jessica A. Donnelly



