



COA (SP) 2024-036  
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Historical Resources &  
Cultural Arts

2327 Salzedo Street  
Coral Gables  
Florida, 33134

P: 305-460-5093  
E: hist@coralgables.com

**STAFF REPORT  
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
FOR THE PROPERTY AT  
2701 INDIAN MOUND TRAIL  
A CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE WITHIN  
THE “CHURCH OF THE LITTLE FLOWER HISTORIC DISTRICT”**

- Proposal:** The application requests design approval for the new construction of a one-story, approximately 19,123 square foot, multi-purpose building.
- Architect:** ZYSCOVICH Architects
- Owner:** Archdiocese of Miami
- Legal Description:** All of Blocks 6-6-A & 7, Coral Gables Section “D,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 25, at Page 74, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.
- Site Characteristics:** The property is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Indian Mound Trail and Valencia Avenue. The primary elevation faces south to St. Theresa Catholic School.

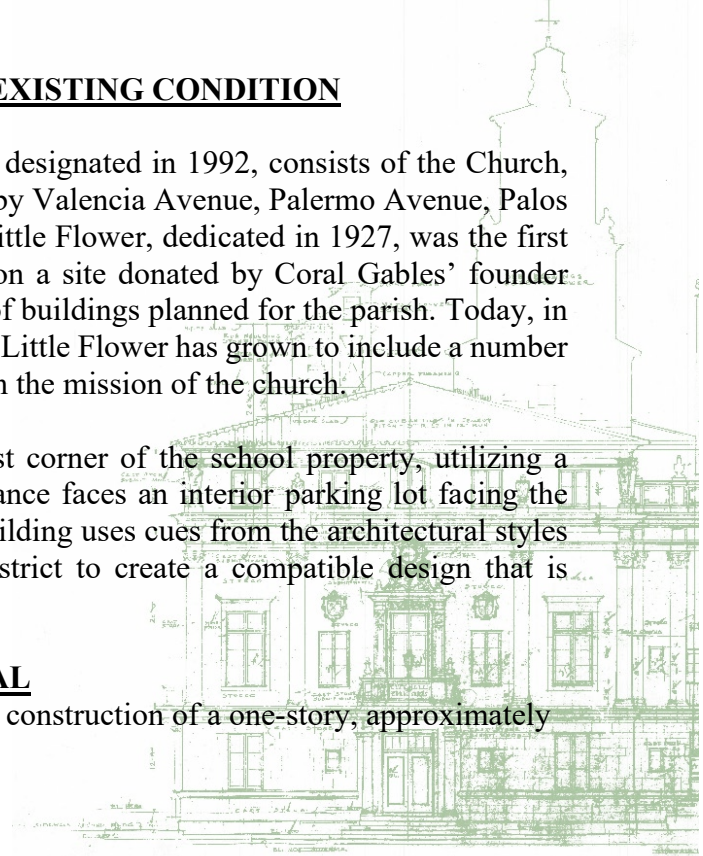
**BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITION**

The “Church of the Little Flower Historic District,” designated in 1992, consists of the Church, Parish Hall, Rectory and School, generally bounded by Valencia Avenue, Palermo Avenue, Palos Street and Indian Mound Trail. The Church of the Little Flower, dedicated in 1927, was the first Catholic church to be built in Coral Gables. Built on a site donated by Coral Gables’ founder George Merrick, the church was the first in a series of buildings planned for the parish. Today, in response to the needs of the parish, the Church of the Little Flower has grown to include a number of buildings for the specific functions in keeping with the mission of the church.

The site considered today is located at the northeast corner of the school property, utilizing a portion of the existing athletic field. The main entrance faces an interior parking lot facing the historic school buildings. The new, multi-purpose building uses cues from the architectural styles of the contributing buildings within the historic district to create a compatible design that is sensitive to its historic context.

**PROPOSAL**

The application requests design approval for the new construction of a one-story, approximately 19,123 square foot, multi-purpose building.



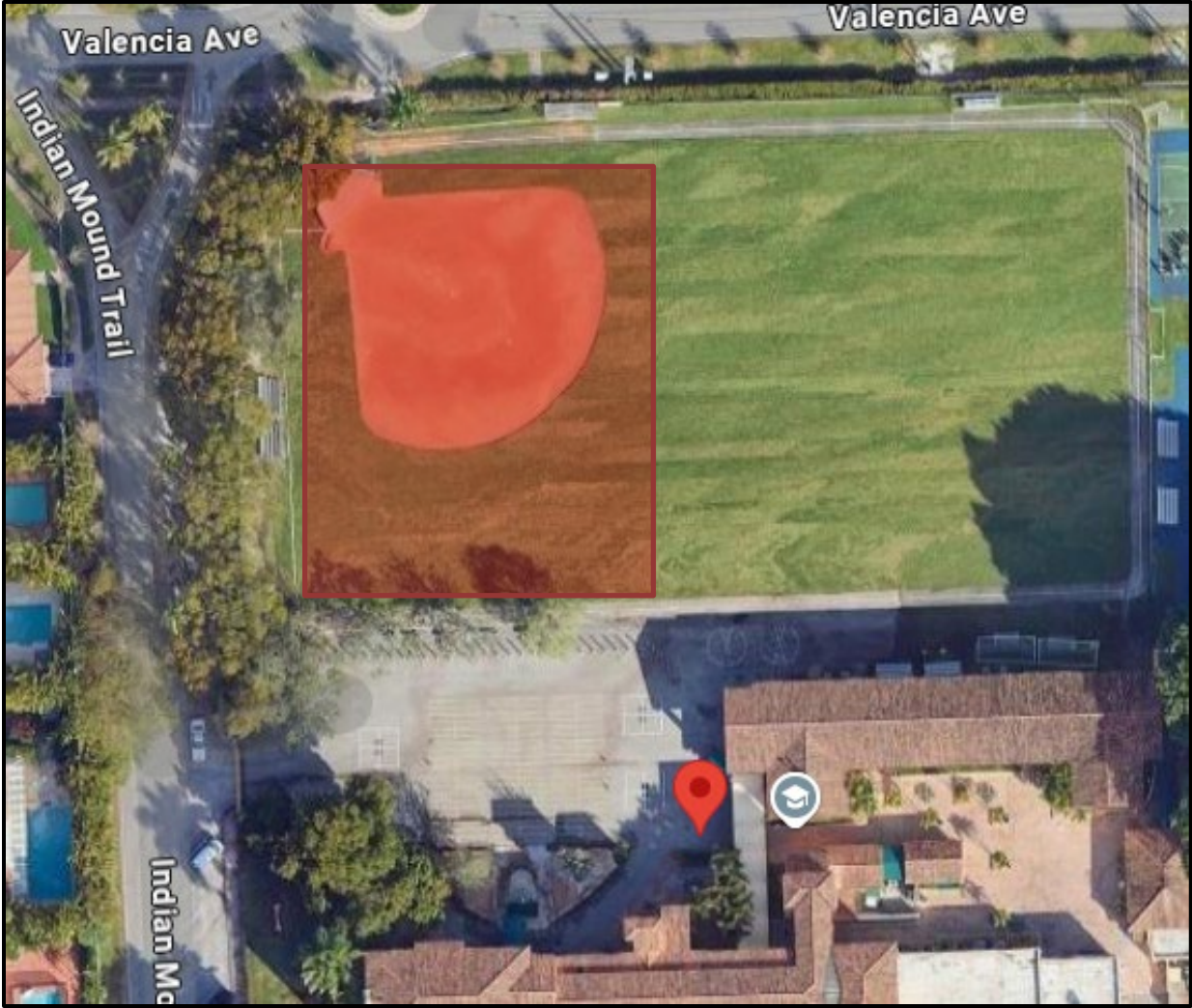


Figure 1: Current photo, 2024



Figure 2: Proposed Rendering provided by Zyscovich Architects

### **SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION**

The following Standards have application in this matter:

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

### **STAFF OBSERVATIONS**

The application requests design approval for the new construction of a one-story, approximately 19,123 square foot, multi-purpose building. The new multi-purpose building includes a new gymnasium, a requirement for the school to renew its accreditation from the Florida Catholic Conference as recognized by the National Council of Private School Accreditation. In addition to the gymnasium, there will be a new theater, music room, classrooms and administrative offices. Sitework includes reconfiguration of the athletic field and new landscaping.

The new building is designed to compliment the Mediterranean designed buildings on campus and to integrate seamlessly with the surrounding context. The building has a textured stucco finish, two-piece barrel tile terracotta roof, multi-lite windows, arched openings, exposed rafter tails and an arcade along three sides. The scale of the building is dictated by the size requirements of the new gymnasium, but the architect has manipulated the mass so that it feels more in scale to the other buildings on site. As per the letter of intent, the large mass of the building will be scaled down with a series of barrel tiled roof porticoes and parapet roofs. The tile will be a Ludowici terra cotta barrel tile, previously approved for other structures on the campus and the parapet roofs will be trimmed with a coral stone band to match the existing buildings.

#### **South (Front) Elevation (A-400):**

The front of the building will have a gable roof carried by three arched openings clad in a terra cotta stone to highlight the main entrance to the gymnasium. The arched openings are flanked on either side by an arcade that runs the entire south, east and west elevations. The arcade has a single slope, terra cotta tile roof with exposed wood rafter tails – a nod to the classroom buildings on the opposite side of the site. A tile pattern insert will be used along the wall of the front entry, this application needs further study to be worked out with staff. The main entry doors seem out of scale with the proposed window size and proportions and should be taller to fit in with the adjacent openings.

#### **North (Valencia-facing) Elevation (A-400):**

The north elevation faces Valencia Avenue, is considered the rear of the building. Taking into consideration the residential neighbors, there is little activity on this façade. The rhythm and types of openings are consistent with the rest of the building. The mass of the building steps down toward the street to bring down the scale to relate to the residential scale on Valencia Avenue.

**East Side Elevation (A-401):**

The east elevation faces the athletic field. The arcade from the front elevation wraps the corner of the building. The gymnasium has a gabled, terracotta barrel tile roof that projects from the center and the massing steps down from there. At the center bay, a columned arcade creates a covered space for students to gather. This is flanked by a decorative pre-cast screen panel, in a design similar to the balconies on the school building. The proportions of the doors need to be further studied, in relation to the size of the window openings – this can be worked out with staff. Simple stone banding and details are used to highlight the change in heights and complement the existing details of the historic structures on the campus.

**West Side (Indian Mound Trail-facing) Elevation (A-401):**

The west façade is detailed in a similar manner to the east elevation. This side of the building faces Indian Mound Trail, where most of the residences face San Domingo Street except for 2610 Indian Mound Trail. The centrally located covered arcade opens up to a small plaza covered with brick pavers. There is existing landscaping to mitigate any potential noise concerns to the neighbors.

**VARIANCES**

No variances are being requested at this time.

**BOARD OF ARCHITECTS**

The proposal was reviewed on numerous occasion and ultimately approved with conditions by the Board Architects on November 27, 2024. The BOA notes were as follows:

- See 11”x17” Sheets of Page A-201 for notes (Attached).

The comments have not been incorporated into the plans provided. The applicant will work with staff and City Architect to bring the plans into compliance with the recommendations of the BOA.

**STAFF CONCLUSION**

The application requests design approval for the new construction of a one-story, approximately 19,123 square foot, multi-purpose building. The proposed new construction uses cues from the surrounding historic structures to create a compatible and sensitive design. In addition to the Standards 9 and 10 of the Secretary of Interior Standard’s for Rehabilitation, the National Park Service recommends that the following be considered:

- Related new construction – including buildings, driveways, parking lots, landscape improvements and other new features – must not alter the historic character of a property. A property’s historic function must be evident even if there is a change of use.
- The location of new construction should be considered carefully in order to follow the setbacks of historic buildings and to avoid blocking their primary elevations. New construction should be placed away from or at the side or rear of historic buildings and must avoid obscuring, damaging, or destroying character-defining features of these buildings or the site.
- Protecting the historic setting and context of a property, including the degree of open space and building density, must always be considered when planning new construction on an historic site This entails identifying the formal or informal arrangements of buildings on the site, and whether they have a distinctive urban, suburban, or rural character. For example, a historic building traditionally surrounded by open space must not be crowded with dense development.

December 19, 2024

- In properties with multiple historic buildings, the historic relationship between buildings must also be protected. Contributing buildings must not be isolated from one another by the insertion of new construction.
- As with new additions, the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of new construction on the site of a historic building must be compatible with those of the historic building. When visible and in close proximity to historic buildings, the new construction must be subordinate to these buildings. New construction should also be distinct from the old and must not attempt to replicate historic buildings elsewhere on site and to avoid creating a false sense of historic development.
- The limitations on the size, scale, and design of new construction may be less critical the farther it is located from historic buildings.
- As with additions, maximizing the advantage of existing site conditions, such as wooded areas or drops in grade, that limit visibility is highly recommended.
- Historic landscapes and significant viewsheds must be preserved. Also, significant archeological resources should be taken into account when evaluating the placement of new construction, and, as appropriate, mitigation measures should be implemented if the archeological resources will be disturbed.

Staff believes the proposal meets the criteria for new construction within the boundaries of a historic district and requests that the following conditions be incorporated into any motion for approval:

1. Window/door muntins are to be high-profile / dimensional.
2. Window/door glass to be clear/non-reflective/non-tint.
3. Roof tile is to be true two-piece barrel tile, terra cotta.
4. Textured stucco should be differentiated from the original stucco on the historic buildings.
5. Specifications and details of the decorative precast screen, cast stone wall plaque, wall tile insert, columns, rafter tails, and parapets must be included in the permit plans.
6. Further study of the door opening sizes to be worked out with staff.
7. Similarly, provide NOAs for the impact-resistant windows and ensure that the configuration shown in the submitted drawings can be installed.

**Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:**

A motion to **APPROVE** the design proposal approval for the new construction of a one-story, approximately 19,123 square foot, multi-purpose building on the property located at **2701 Indian Mound Trail**, a Contributing Resource within the “Church of the Little Flower Historic District,” legally described as All of Blocks 6-6-A & 7, Coral Gables Section “D,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 25, at Page 74, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and **APPROVE WITH THE CONDITION NOTED ABOVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully submitted,



Anna Pernas

Historic Preservation Officer