

EXCERPT – AV2019-002

AGENDA
NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING
HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2021
AT 4:00 P.M.
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
405 BILTMORE WAY
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

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PARTICIPANTS:

ALBERT MENENDEZ, Chairperson
CESAR GARCIA-PONS, Vice Chair
BRUCE EHRENHAFT, Board Member
ALICIA BACHE-WIIG, Board Member
MICHAEL MAXWELL, Board Member
DONA SPAIN, Board Member
MARGARET A. "PEGGY" ROLANDO, Board Member
XAVIER DURANA, Board Member

ALSO PRESENT:

KARA KAUTZ.
WARREN ADAMS.
GUSTAVO CEBALLOS, City Attorney.
NANCY LYONS, City Clerk.

1 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: So that's basically
2 Items 1 and 2 on the agenda under Item 8,
3 correct?

4 MR. WARREN ADAMS: Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Okay.

6 Swearing in. If any persons in the
7 audience will be testifying today, please rise
8 to be sworn in.

9 (Thereupon, the audience was duly sworn.)

10 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: We're going to start
11 with Item VI, No. 1, application for ad valorem
12 tax relief for the property at 1223 Lisbon
13 Street, a Local Historic Landmark, legally
14 described as Lot 29, Block 59, Coral Gables
15 Granada Section, according to the plat thereof,
16 as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 113 of the
17 Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.
18 The related Special Certificate of
19 Appropriateness, COA (SP) 2016-024, was granted
20 design approval by the Historic Preservation
21 Board on January 19, 2017.

22 MS. KARA KAUTZ: Thank you. Can you put
23 on the Power Point, please?

24 This is the location map of the property
25 in question and obviously it's hard to see. I

1 just want you to get the general vicinity.

2 So the residence at 1223 Lisbon Street was
3 permitted in 1924. It was Permit No. 228 in
4 the City, although it was likely constructed
5 prior to the incorporation of the City. The
6 architect of the home is unknown, but the
7 residence is an example of the modest homes
8 built in the Mediterranean revival
9 architectural style that defined Merrick's
10 vision for the City.

11 These homes were smaller in size but built
12 with the same quality for construction and the
13 Med-revival features as other structures that
14 shaped the new City in the 1920's. Prior to
15 its alterations, the property could have
16 qualified for a Coral Gables cottage.

17 The applicant is requesting ad valorem tax
18 relief for the renovation of the historic
19 structure and the construction of a two-story
20 addition and alternations to the residents.
21 These were approved under COA (SP) 2016-24 and
22 COA (ST) 2019-83, but only portions of the
23 proposed work will actually apply to the tax
24 exemption and that's determined by the Property
25 Appraiser.

1 As I scroll through the slides, I will
2 note the improvements that were made to the
3 property under the application. This is a
4 current photograph of the home today. Their
5 general renovations notes there were new impact
6 resistant encasement windows to match the
7 original configuration, new barrel tile roof,
8 painting the house, restoration of the
9 auxillary structure to return to a garage use
10 previously converted to living space, new
11 garage doors that mimic the original doors,
12 overall structural improvements, new
13 mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems,
14 engaged column that was returned to the front
15 facade, complete interior reconfiguration,
16 stucco replacement and repair and replacement
17 of the original window sills.

18 There's a two-story addition consisting of
19 a covered terrace and two bedroom suites on the
20 second floor above. The site improvements
21 included the installation of new brick paver
22 driveway and walkways, the installation of a
23 new swimming pool and deck and installation of
24 new landscaping.

25 So the ad valorem applications are always

1 tied to restoration work and there has to be a
2 sufficient restoration component to warrant the
3 granting of the abatement. The intent is to
4 encourage the owners of historic homes to
5 restore them and do appropriate and sympathetic
6 alterations and additions.

7 I wanted to bring a few items to the
8 Board's attention for discussion. When staff
9 conducted the final inspections several
10 deviations from the approved plans were noted.
11 They included the removal of features on the
12 home window notably the original window sills
13 and the decorative inset that you see here
14 above the original front door, removal and
15 relocation of several of the decorative round
16 clay vents and re-stuccoing of areas of the
17 house.

18 I just wanted to bring this to your
19 attention because that's not something that we
20 encourage and it's not considered restoration
21 work.

22 The owner is here in the audience if you
23 have I any questions for him. That's all that
24 I have.

25 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Would the owner like

1 to speak?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm here if you
3 have any questions.

4 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Why don't you step up.
5 Why were there deviations from the original
6 plan?

7 MR. MIGUEL NOGUEROL: Yeah, this was
8 really old constructions that in my view was
9 really in bad shape. So the general contractor
10 was preempted to really be very careful but a
11 lot of the structures really didn't hold off,
12 they didn't stay. So it was very difficult in
13 some cases like this one, but I think there are
14 many, many cases that we really keep the
15 original installation. For example, even the
16 roof for example, we were able to do a sandwich
17 of the old wood that was there originally just
18 to keep preserve it.

19 And we -- as you saw, for example, in some
20 of the structures they were totally destroyed.
21 The house was probably almost close in my view
22 to be demolished. We had to reinforce all the
23 structure underneath to stand up, reinforce all
24 of the structures to really recover what it
25 was.

1 For example, the garage was not even a
2 garage anymore. They have a wall there. We
3 had to open up and recover. Even the painting,
4 I think if you see the house today, it looks
5 much closer of what we have in 1940.

6 So I think we did our best in our view in
7 terms of taking care of this structure and
8 maintain the main characteristics of this
9 historic house of Coral Gables.

10 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: But when you have
11 those situations, that's why we have a historic
12 department, you can call and talk to them and
13 get their ideas to the best way to approach it
14 or to solve a problem.

15 MR. MIGUEL NOGUEROL: Yeah, and I think we
16 did this in several situations, particularly in
17 this one the roof that we actually had stopped
18 everything, we had to redesign the roof
19 completely to preserve the previous and I think
20 in other several situations we always been very
21 interactive with the Board and consulting.

22 But in this case specifically I think was
23 probably the decision to do the best to look
24 exactly what it was. I think it is close, but
25 I'm not really an expert. Perhaps if we go

1 back, we could have check it once again if
2 there was anything we could do it, but it was
3 really -- the structure was really pretty
4 destroyed in our view. I think there was not
5 much we could do.

6 MS. KARA KAUTZ: There are photos in your
7 packet that some that weren't included here
8 that do show the before state of the house was
9 in a very bad condition. The reason -- and I
10 mentioned this to Mr. Noguero1 that I was going
11 to bring it to your attention is that this is
12 not something that we normally reward, you
13 know, deviations from charactering-defining
14 features.

15 So I just wanted to bring it to your
16 attention. If you all are comfortable with the
17 level of restoration work they did there the
18 structure, then, you know, it's your all's call
19 on this.

20 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Do any Board members
21 have any questions?

22 MR. EHRENHAFT: I have.

23 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Mr. Ehrenhaft.

24 MR. EHRENHAFT: Kara, when I began to read
25 the packet, the very first thing that hit me in

1 the face was the replacement of the original
2 window sills and those are not normally things
3 that we see highly deteriorated. So that
4 bothered me. So it was something I was going
5 to bring up. But, then, you also indicated
6 that there were recessions in the windows that
7 were above some of the --

8 MS. KARA KAUTZ: There is just one.

9 If you can put the Power Point back up,
10 please.

11 So this used to be the original front door
12 location and it had been moved to the
13 perpendicular wall. So that was the original
14 condition. When we went out and did the
15 inspection, what we saw was on the left and
16 what was on the right was after them trying to
17 correct it.

18 MR. EHRENHAFT: I see.

19 MS. KARA KAUTZ: So the original sills are
20 on the left in the picture here. The top inset
21 picture is what we found upon inspection. You
22 can still see like the drill holes, what the
23 final product that they ended up finishing it
24 with is on the right.

25 MR. MIGUEL NOGUEROL: And when the --

1 because the windows were all replaced, it
2 should be hurricane proof, they all had to be
3 reinforced and in the process to kind of
4 reinforce the window, we could not keep the
5 original there.

6 MS. SPAIN: You know, you can. You can
7 keep the original sills. I mean, sometimes
8 they do it from the inside to make sure that
9 those -- because the sills basically are
10 decorative. They're not really -- and it's the
11 same way with the vents. So it would have been
12 possible to save them or if you had called the
13 department out to look at them, quite possibly
14 you could recreate them and they would look the
15 same.

16 But now, you know, it doesn't really look
17 anything like it was before. Which is a pity
18 because you did so much work to this house and
19 so much restoration.

20 MR. MIGUEL NOGUEROL: It was a lot of work
21 we put in to recover so many things. I think
22 you probably remember that roof was -- just
23 added \$10,000 on the cost because we just
24 wanted to keep the -- we are able to keep the
25 original wood of 1940 and just made a sandwich.

1 It's just there. Nobody see it, but we
2 preserve it.

3 And all the internal side, as you can see,
4 was really, really in bad shape. This was a
5 lot of work. It took us a lot, a lot of work
6 and a lot of money. This was terrible.

7 When we tried to approve the project, some
8 of the architects were saying, no, you should
9 demolish this. And then when we start, no, we
10 do not demolish. We want to keep the character
11 of the house. That's why we are moving to
12 Coral Gables. We want to live in that type of
13 scenario.

14 So, we actually fight to keep the project
15 the way originally and I think we did our best
16 in our power to do that.

17 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Mr. Garcia-Pons, do
18 you have a question?

19 MR. GARCIA-PONS: I did, but it was
20 answered.

21 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Does anyone else have
22 any other questions?

23 I'll entertain a motion.

24 MR. DURANA: I'll move.

25 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Mr. Durana.

1 Do we have a second?

2 MS. SPAIN: I'll second it.

3 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Ms. Spain seconds it.

4 MS. SPAIN: And I just want to preface
5 saying that although my signature is on the
6 designation report, my signature is on the
7 certificate of appropriateness report, I feel
8 comfortable not recusing myself on this.

9 THE CLERK: Mr. Durana?

10 MR. DURANA: Yes.

11 THE CLERK: Mr. Ehrenhaft?

12 MR. EHRENHAFT: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: Mr. Maxwell?

14 MR. MAXWELL: Yes.

15 THE CLERK: Ms. Spain?

16 MS. SPAIN: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Ms. Bache-Wiig?

18 MS. BACHE-WIIG: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: Ms. Rolando?

20 MS. ROLANDO: Reluctantly, yes.

21 THE CLERK: Mr. Menendez?

22 CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Garcia-Pons?

24 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yes.

25 THE COURT: Motion passes.