

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING
VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT
HYBRID FORMAT
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2024, COMMENCING AT 4:00 P.M.

Board Members Present at Commission Chamber:

Michael J. Maxwell, Chairperson
Alejandro Silva, Vice Chairperson
Ana Alvarez
Javier Banos
Michelle Cuervo Dunaj
Xavier F. Durana
Cesar Garcia-Pons
Dona Spain

City Staff and Consultants:

Anna Pernas, Historical Resources & Cultural Arts
Director
Kara Kautz, Assistant Historic Perservation Officer
Yvelisse Bonilla, Administrative Assistant/Board
Secretary
Stephanie Throckmorton, Assistant City Attorney

Also Participating:

Mario Garcia-Serra, Esq.
Richard Heisenbottle
Willy Bermello
Alex Adams, via Zoom
Karelia Carbonell, via Phone

1 THEREUPON:

2 (The following proceedings were held.)

3 * * * * *

4 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. We've got the
5 next item, which is Case File LD (sic)
6 2024-009, Consideration of the local historic
7 designation of the property at 1414 Galiano
8 Street, legally described at Lots 12 & the East
9 15 Feet of Lot 13, Block 32, Coral Gables
10 Douglas Section, according to the Plat thereof,
11 Plat Book 25, Page 69, of the Public Records of
12 Miami-Dade.

13 MS. PERNAS: Good afternoon. Anna Pernas,
14 Historic Preservation Officer. I'll begin --
15 or not.

16 The multi-family residences at 1414 Galiano
17 Street, historically known as 103 Menores
18 Avenue, is before you for consideration for
19 designation as a Local Historic Landmark. It
20 was designed by Paist and Steward and
21 constructed in 1937.

22 The application is the result of a Historic
23 Significance Determination Letter submitted by
24 the property owner.

25 As per Section -- Article 8, Section 8-103

1 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code, the Criteria
2 for Designation for Historic Landmarks, "A
3 Local Historic Landmark must have significant
4 character, interest or value, as part of the
5 historical, cultural, archeological aesthetic
6 or architectural heritage of the city, state or
7 nation. For designation, a property must meet
8 one of the criteria outlined in the Code."

9 1414 Galiano Street is eligible as a Local
10 Historic Landmark based on three criteria:
11 Cultural -- Historical, Cultural Significance,
12 Criteria 4, it exemplifies the historical,
13 cultural, political, economic or social trends
14 of the community; Architectural Significance,
15 Criteria 1, it portrays the environment in an
16 era of history characterized by one or more
17 distinctive architectural style, and Criteria
18 2, it embodies those distinguishing
19 characteristics of an architectural style or
20 period or method of construction.

21 The property at 1414 Galiano Street is a 65
22 by 110 corner lot in the Douglas Section. On
23 the property is a duplex and an auxiliary
24 building that houses a garage and studio
25 apartment. It was permitted in December 1936.

1 There has been no additions to the structures
2 and they retain their original style and
3 character. It should be noted that there are
4 two street facing entries to the duplex, and as
5 platted, the original address for the property
6 was 103 Menores Avenue. It remained the
7 address of record until the mid 1960s. It
8 appears that by 1965, the legal address had
9 changed to 1414 Galiano street.

10 Coral Gables development history is divided
11 into three major historical periods. George
12 Merrick founded it in the early 1920s based on
13 his vision for a fully conceived Mediterranean
14 inspired city. It is now considered one of the
15 first modern planned communities in the United
16 States. The architecture constructed during
17 this initial period combined elements commonly
18 used in Spanish, Moorish and Italian
19 architecture and it has come to be known as the
20 Mediterranean Revival Style.

21 During the 1920s, structures and amenities
22 were built almost exclusively in this style.
23 The construction of the multi-family residences
24 at 1414 Galiano Street occurred during the
25 City's second developmental period and was

1 amongst the early buildings built during the
2 New Deal Era. It aided in introducing the City
3 to a new architectural era, as architects began
4 to embrace modern trends.

5 When developing Coral Gables, Merrick
6 purposefully embraced both, the City Beautiful
7 and the Garden City movements. Garden City
8 precepts included apportioning sections of the
9 City to the specific uses and planning for
10 various incomes. In 1923, Merrick purchased
11 portions of the Douglas Grove Fruit Farm from
12 Pioneer John Douglas, and developed it as a
13 distinctive section, with high grade apartments
14 that would provide housing affordable to
15 working class residents.

16 While the single-family sections were
17 intended to be quiet neighborhoods, the Douglas
18 Section was clearly meant to be a hub of
19 activity. Running through its heart was Ponce
20 de Leon Boulevard, a wide parkway and one of
21 the main commercial thoroughfares in Coral
22 Gables. Access to this section was through
23 the Grand Coral Gables Douglas Entrance, which
24 was hailed as the finest of all Coral Gables
25 notable gateways. The Douglas Section, now

1 often referred to as North Ponce, retains this
2 context to date.

3 In 1925, a series of apartment buildings
4 were built near the future site of 1414 Galiano
5 Street, and they were the primary context for
6 Paist and Steward's design a decade later.
7 They were designed by Architect H. George Fink,
8 a member of Merrick's initial design team.
9 Fink designed a series of two-story apartment
10 buildings, that each had the street presence of
11 a single-family home, thus making them
12 distinctive from other contemporaneous
13 apartment buildings in the Douglas Section.

14 Note the octagonal towers and the
15 protruding entry bay at 122 and 126 Menores,
16 along with the extended eve at 124 Mendoza
17 Avenue. These are features from which Paist
18 and Steward took visual cues. In this 1938
19 aerial, this cluster of two-story apartment
20 buildings is outlined in orange and the arrow
21 shows the location of 1414 Galiano Street.

22 Unfortunately, as construction was ramping
23 up in the Douglas Section, in 1926 -- the 1926
24 hurricane hit. It severely curtailed buildings
25 -- building in Coral Gables, a trend that

1 continued throughout the Economic Depression of
2 the 1930s, and as a fault, despite valiant
3 efforts, Merrick's grand plans to completing
4 his Mediterranean inspired city ended.

5 As seen here, recovery in the 1930s was
6 slow. As the decade wore on, relief measures
7 expanded during the New Deal Administration and
8 people adjusted to a new way of life. As a
9 result, priorities and aesthetics changed.
10 This was reflected in all aspects of life,
11 including the types of residences that were
12 built. During this period, only several
13 hundred structures were built in Coral Gables.

14 The style of these buildings was a distinct
15 departure from the ornamented and picturesque
16 Mediterranean Revival style that had dominated
17 the City's landscape since its inception. It
18 transitioned away from the Mediterranean
19 Revival and began embracing modern and national
20 trends.

21 In South Florida, Modernistic Art Deco
22 emerged during the Mid 1920s and Modernistic
23 Art Moderne during the 1930s. However, in
24 Coral Gables, the shift towards the new styles
25 was slow. Rather than fully embracing the

1 Modernistic styles prevailing in other
2 communities, Coral Gables architecture was a
3 hybrid. In a community whose early identity
4 was so strongly tied to the Mediterranean
5 theme, it is not surprising that most
6 architects thought to acknowledge Coral Gables
7 roots, as well as Merrick's desire for a
8 cohesively designed community, thus, while they
9 embraced Modern styles, they also still
10 retained Mediterranean Revival elements.

11 This transitional architecture, which
12 combines Mediterranean Revival with Modernistic
13 elements was not an isolated stylistic
14 phenomenon within Coral Gables, but was seen
15 throughout South Florida. It was, however,
16 more pronounced in Coral Gables. In the 1930s,
17 it was often called Modern Spanish. This
18 unique hybrid type of architecture is known as
19 the Mediterranean Transitional Style in
20 official style lexicons, which it was also
21 known as Mediterranean Modern, or, when
22 specifically warranted, the Med Deco
23 Transitional. The multi-family buildings at
24 1414 Galiano Street was designed in the
25 Mediterranean Transitional Style, with

1 influences from the Modernistic Art Moderne.

2 In 1936, R.W. Holding Corporation acquired
3 the property at 1414 Galiano Street. The
4 president of the company was J.W. Ricketts.
5 Ricketts had been a member of the Merrick
6 Construction team at its onset and reportedly
7 built the home in Coral Gables in 1921.
8 Ricketts, an engineer and construction manager,
9 quickly rose through the ranks and became the
10 president of Merrick's Coral Gables
11 Construction Company. Ricketts hired Paist and
12 Steward to design the multi-family residences.
13 Phineas Paist was a member of the Merrick's
14 design team, and when Coral Gables was
15 incorporated in 1925, Merrick appointed him as
16 the City Architect, a position he held until
17 his death in 1937.

18 Paist and Steward designed a host of
19 buildings in Coral Gables. Hence, the original
20 owner and the architect of 1414 Galiano Street
21 were both deeply involved in the development of
22 Coral Gables from its inception. They were
23 well-versed in Merrick's vision for Coral
24 Gables and dedicated to helping Coral Gables
25 grow, and well positioned to meld the new

1 Modernistic styles with the traditional
2 architecture of the City.

3 Paist designed 1414 Galiano Street in the
4 Mediterranean Transitional Style. It blended
5 into the character of Coral Gables, in general,
6 as well as specifically with Fink's distinct
7 1920s apartments in its direct vicinity, while
8 embracing the Modernistic Style of Art Moderne.
9 It is amongst the earliest examples of the
10 Mediterranean Transitional Style in Coral
11 Gables.

12 The buildings at 1414 Galiano Street are
13 two stories, and like Fink's apartments,
14 present as a single-family home, with front
15 lawns. The duplex is Modernistic, with it's
16 smooth stucco, corner and porthole windows,
17 horizontal banding and minimal decorative
18 elements. The low pitched roof of the duplex
19 was originally clad in a barrel tile, which was
20 a character defining element of the
21 Mediterranean Revival Style.

22 The auxiliary building has the massing of a
23 Mediterranean Revival era garage, with its flat
24 roof and parapets, as well as the style -- as
25 the style's distinctive barrel tile coping and

1 decoratively-arranged round vents.

2 The entries of the duplex also highlight
3 both styles. The Menores Avenue entry has a
4 classical Mediterranean Revival feel,
5 harmonizing with the other buildings on the
6 street, while the Galiano Street is geometric
7 and Modernistic. The windows also meld both
8 styles. Rather than the Modernistic larger
9 pane windows, they were Mediterranean Revival
10 casements. However, they are Modern steel
11 casements with some arranged -- sorry, some
12 arranged as Modernistic corner windows.

13 Additional character defining elements
14 include, but are not limited to, features
15 applied or arranged for overall horizontal
16 emphasis, such as the modern beltcourse,
17 regularity of window size and placement, wide
18 eaves, with boxed cornice, incised horizontal
19 lines and stylized eyebrow. Further discussion
20 is provided in the designation report.

21 Built over a crawl space, the two-story
22 duplex is constructed with masonry block units
23 and clad in a smooth stucco. It is rectangular
24 in plan, with a two-story bay at its northeast
25 corner. While the duplex is two-stories, it

1 gives the impression of a lower slung, and
2 hence a more horizontally oriented structure.
3 The pair of raised parallel lines form a band
4 that runs like a stringcourse around the
5 building.

6 As seen in this 1940s historic photo, they
7 were originally a different color, giving it
8 further visual height and weight. A
9 stringcourse normally marks the transition of
10 one story to the next. Here it is placed
11 higher than the one story level and the windows
12 of the upper stories sit in the stringcourse,
13 taking the place of a sill. The result is a
14 visual force shortening of the height of the
15 building. The shallow pitched hip roofs, with
16 the wide eaves, produce strong horizontal
17 elements that further adds to the force
18 perspective of a lower more horizontal
19 structure. The hipped roofs were originally
20 clad in two piece barrel tile and the current
21 flat tile was installed in 2011.

22 The fenestration is another strong element
23 that demonstrates the Mediterranean
24 Transitional Style. The openings are simple
25 and recessed in the Modernistic fashion and

1 without sills or lintels to give the impression
2 of rectangles cut out from the building cube.
3 The windows were originally casements, with a
4 muntin pattern in the Mediterranean Revival
5 tradition, rather than the Modernistic large
6 pane windows. However, in Mediterranean
7 Transitional fashion, they were modern steel
8 casements with thinner muntins and transoms.

9 At the second story, the casement windows
10 are placed as corner windows, which is a
11 character defining Modernistic feature. The
12 window sizes are consistent, which aids to the
13 horizontal impression of the duplex, versus the
14 varied windows sizes of the Mediterranean
15 Revival Style. The steel casements were placed
16 in the current awning windows sometime after
17 1970, but no permit has been located to date.

18 The front entry features are the most
19 ornamented element of the residence. They were
20 present -- each present a different facet of
21 the Mediterranean Transitional Style. The east
22 entry facing Galiano Street has a Modernistic
23 flair, while the south entry facing Menores
24 Street has a Mediterranean Revival inspiration.

25 The Menores Avenue facade faces some of

1 Fink's 1920s apartment buildings and it was
2 clearly designed to harmonize with them. The
3 facade is symmetrical and at the center is a
4 small projecting entry bay. This is classical
5 in nature, with a tapered swooped roof hood and
6 a molded cornice and incised horizontal lines
7 simulating quoins flanked the doorway.

8 The front door is original. The flanking
9 doors are rectangular built-in planter --
10 flanking the door are rectangular built-in
11 planters, whose brick coping extends under the
12 door and creates the impression that the door
13 ensemble sits on a base, which is most clearly
14 seen in the 1970 photo here.

15 In these historic photos on the right, also
16 note the cupula capped in barrel tile,
17 reminiscent of an Italian Belvedere centered on
18 the hip roof. This feature is not on the
19 permit drawings, but it appears in historic
20 photos until at least 1970. Also, on this
21 facade, note is a simple porthole window,
22 bringing a subtle but characteristic defining
23 Modernistic Art Moderne feature to the facade.

24 The Galiano Street facade is asymmetric,
25 with an entry porch feature that is geometric

1 and stark in nature and puts a Modernistic
2 stamp in this facade. The porch retains its
3 cracked tile floor, tile steps and a
4 Modernistic curved built-in planter. The
5 planter has a brick coping, contrasting with
6 its smooth stucco and provides another
7 horizontal element.

8 The vertical plank front door, with its now
9 unfilled porthole is original. Over the tiled
10 entry stoop, a square column supports the
11 single rectangular roof. Slid between them is
12 a stylized Modernistic eyebrow that wraps
13 around the bay window and extends to become the
14 roof of the back porch, as well. It should be
15 noted that the metal clamshell awnings
16 currently shelter most of the windows of the
17 duplex and they obscure the visual impact of
18 the eyebrow and other features.

19 The two-story bay window feature at the
20 northeast corner of the residence is another
21 melding of Mediterranean Revival and
22 Modernistic Styles. First, the choice echoes
23 the octagonal Mediterranean-inspired towers of
24 122 and 126 Menores Avenue. Also, two-story
25 bay windows is a feature associated with

1 Italian architecture, and on the east facade,
2 it projects accordingly. However, on the north
3 facade, it curves into the plane of the facade,
4 resulting in a classic ship like form common in
5 Art Moderne, which is best seen in the 1970
6 historic photos here on the right. Overall,
7 the duplex's bay window is streamlined in a
8 Modernistic manner, with the emphasis of the
9 horizontal banding of windows, stylized
10 eyebrow, raised stringcourse and wide roof
11 eaves.

12 On the north facade, a screened porch
13 provided another entry to the first story. The
14 feature is extant. Note that the eyebrow
15 wrapping around the bay window extends to
16 become the roof of this porch. At an
17 undetermined date, it became legally necessary
18 to provide a second egress for the second story
19 apartment. To accomodate this, the second
20 story window above the porch was enlarged to a
21 door and an exterior wooded staircase was
22 installed.

23 To the north of the duplex, along Galiano
24 Street, is a two-story flat roofed garage
25 auxiliary building. A portion of it is still

1 visible in the Circa 1940 photo shown here.

2 The structure houses a two-car garage on the
3 bottom and a studio apartment at the top floor.
4 The apartment is accessed by a wooden staircase
5 at the rear of the building. This building is
6 also in the Mediterranean Transitional Style.

7 In the Modernistic fashion, it is clad in
8 the smooth stucco. In the Mediterranean vein,
9 the building has parapets, with a barrel tile
10 coping along the front, group round vents and
11 windows that were original casements. The
12 round vents are decoratively arranged in a line
13 that center the second story. The building
14 currently has awning windows. Permit for the
15 change of the garage doors and the windows has
16 not been located to date.

17 In conclusion, 1414 Galiano Street was
18 constructed in 1937 in the Mediterranean
19 Transitional Style. George Merrick founded
20 Coral Gables during the South Florida real
21 estate boom of the 1920s, envisioning a fully
22 conceived Mediterranean inspired city.

23 Building boomed in Coral Gables until the
24 late 1920s, when the economy and other factors
25 ended Merrick's dream and construction ground

1 to a halt. When building slowly resumed in the
2 1930s, Coral Gables moved into a new
3 architectural era. Overall, the construction
4 was sparse, with only several hundred
5 residences built and they represent a turning
6 point.

7 1414 Galiano Street is amongst those
8 structures. During this period, architects
9 embraced Modernistic aesthetics, but also
10 sought to acknowledge Coral Gables
11 Mediterranean roots and Merrick's desire for a
12 cohesively designed city. The result was a
13 style that is now known as Mediterranean
14 Transitional.

15 The building was commissioned by J.W.
16 Ricketts and designed by Phineas Paist, both of
17 whom were integral to the Merrick team and
18 deeply involved in the development of Coral
19 Gables. Paist's Mediterranean Transitional
20 design reflects that 1414 Galiano Street is
21 amongst the earliest examples of this city.

22 From a comparison of historic photographs
23 and the architectural plans with the historic
24 fabric, as well as an examination of the
25 building permits and records, it is determined

1 that the property at 1414 Galiano Street
2 retains its historic integrity. Hence, 1414
3 Galiano Street significantly contributes to the
4 historic fabric of the City of Coral Gables and
5 is part of the collection of quality buildings
6 that serve as a visible reminder of the history
7 and the cultural heritage of the City.

8 Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the
9 Local Historic Designation of the property at
10 1414 Galiano Street, based on the following
11 criteria: The historic cultural significance,
12 George Merrick purchased the Douglas Section
13 area in 1923, and at its inception, Merrick
14 slated the Douglas Section as a distinctive
15 area with high grade apartments. The
16 multi-family residences at 1414 Galiano were
17 built in 1937, during the City's second
18 development period.

19 Recovery in the 1930s was slow, but by
20 1936, permit dollar values were in the vicinity
21 of a million dollars, where they held steady
22 for several years. With implementation of the
23 New Deal and other incentives, the building
24 industry finally experienced a small resurgence
25 in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The style

1 of the few hundred buildings constructed during
2 this second development phase was a distinct
3 departure from the ornamented and picturesque
4 Mediterranean Revival style that had dominated
5 the City's landscape since its inception and it
6 transitioned away from the Mediterranean
7 Revival and began embracing minimal traditional
8 Modernistic Masonry Vernacular and ranch
9 styles.

10 Staff believes that that meets Criteria 4,
11 exemplifies the historical, cultural,
12 political, economic and social trends of the
13 community, and for its architectural
14 significance, where it portrays the environment
15 of an era of history characterized by one or
16 more distinct architectural style and embodies
17 the distinguishing characters of the
18 architectural style or period of method of
19 construction, which Paist designed 1414 Galiano
20 in a Mediterranean Transitional style to blend
21 in to the character of Coral Gables, in
22 general, with Fink's distinct 1920s apartment
23 in its direct vicinity.

24 The buildings at 1414 Galiano are two
25 stories, and like Fink's apartments, they will

1 present a single-family home. They are amongst
2 the earliest examples of the Mediterranean
3 Transitional Style in Coral Gables. The duplex
4 presents as a Modernistic building, with a
5 smooth stucco corner and porthole windows,
6 horizontal banding and minimal decorative
7 elements. However, it seamlessly incorporates
8 elements of Fink's Mediterranean residences.

9 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

10 MS. PERNAS: Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Are there any questions
12 from the Board by Staff or for the applicant?

13 MS. SPAIN: Not yet.

14 MS. PERNAS: So the applicant has a
15 presentation they would like to make.

16 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Very good.

17 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Good afternoon,
18 Mr. Chair, Members of the Board, Mario
19 Garcia-Serra, with offices at 600 Brickell
20 Avenue, here today representing CREH Galiano,
21 LLC, which is the entity that owns the property
22 at 1414 Galiano. The two principals of CREH
23 Galiano are a married couple, Todd Rubinstein
24 and Danielle Gonzalez. Todd is joining us in
25 person today and Danielle is attending via

1 Zoom, as she is on a business trip.

2 I am also joined today by our expert
3 witnesses, Richard Heisenbottle and Willy
4 Bermello. Richard will be showing you a lot of
5 images today, as we make our case, but I want
6 to preface Richard's testimony with the
7 discussion and the importance of certain words.

8 The first is, quasi-judicial, not a term
9 that we use every day, but you've already
10 repeated it a few times during your
11 deliberations today, and it does describe the
12 role of this Board on this issue. You're
13 acting as a court here, deciding as to who is
14 correct as to the application of certain legal
15 criteria to the facts before you. It is
16 long-settled law that quasi-judicial decisions
17 need to be based on competent, substantial
18 evidence to be upheld. Competent and
19 substantial evidence is best described as
20 fact-based evidence, from a reliable and well
21 informed source on the topic.

22 That is very important in this context,
23 where we are discussing historical and
24 architectural significance. First impressions,
25 preferences, nostalgia, a desire to see less

1 construction in order to preserve the
2 environment, none of these should be a basis
3 for a decision here today. What counts here
4 today is whether the facts and an informed
5 interpretation of these facts lead you to
6 conclude that the building at 1414 Galiano is
7 of such historic and architectural value that
8 it must be protected and preserved in
9 perpetuity. That is a high legal standard to
10 satisfy, and we feel it simply is not met here
11 by the facts.

12 There are criteria which Staff is citing
13 to, to support their conclusion, and I, again,
14 ask you to give the key words in that criteria
15 thought and meaning. Significant implies
16 greatness or importance. Exemplify means to be
17 a quintessential example. Similarly embodies
18 means to be an ideal example, not just a
19 building with a few characteristics.

20 The very designation term we are discussing
21 today, historic landmark, means a building of
22 such historic and architectural value that is
23 an essential part of our history. Lastly,
24 architectural styles are well-defined and we
25 feel that Mediterranean Transitional is not an

1 architectural style.

2 With that said, I would introduce Richard
3 Heisenbottle. Rich is one of the most
4 important professionals involved in the
5 Historic Preservation movement in Miami-Dade
6 County in these last 40 years. He has been
7 involved -- well, excuse me, he has degrees
8 from both, the New York Institute of Technology
9 and the University of Miami. His firm has been
10 involved in about every major historic
11 preservation project in Miami, including the
12 Freedom Tower, Miami City Hall, the Olympia
13 Theater and the Biltmore Hotel.

14 Rich is a Former Member and Chair of this
15 Board, and he definitely qualifies as an expert
16 in the history of architecture.

17 MR. HEISENBOTTLE: Mario, thank you very
18 much for the kind introduction, and let me,
19 ladies and gentlemen, say hello, and introduce
20 my associate, Nina Caruso. Nina is our
21 Director of Historic Preservation Services at
22 RJ Heinsenbottle Architects and is going to
23 assist me in this presentation today.

24 So let me start by saying good afternoon,
25 after our fire drill, and -- my name is Rich

1 Heinsenbottle. I am president of RJ
2 Heisenbottle Architects, and I have many fond
3 memories of sitting up there, on the same dais
4 that you're sitting on, as first a member and
5 later chairman of this Historic Preservation
6 Board.

7 Today, I'm here because Mrs. Gonzalez,
8 Mr. Rubinstein, owners of 1414 Galiano, engaged
9 our firm to review the Local Historic Landmark
10 Designation report prepared by our excellent
11 Staff, and to share our findings with you.

12 As many of you may know, over the past 37
13 years, my firm, RJHA, for short, has become
14 synonymous with saving many of our communities
15 most important landmarks. We have done nearly
16 every kind of preservation service that there
17 is within our firm. We have completed over 25
18 studies, evaluations, recommendations, historic
19 designation reports, district reports, you name
20 it.

21 Sometimes my work has included negotiating
22 with the Federal Government to save structures
23 like the Boulevard Shops, when I was president
24 of the Dade Heritage Trust, and sometimes our
25 work involves pro bono work to save things like

1 the Coconut Grove Playhouse. So you probably
2 all know of our extensive background in
3 restoring more than 67 of our most prestigious
4 landmarks, including four Phineas Paist or
5 Paist and Steward buildings that we have
6 under -- two of which we have under restoration
7 right now. So it's rare when I take exception
8 to a historic designation. I respect the
9 reports that Staff puts together and I respect
10 our Staff.

11 1414 Galiano, our reviewed focused on
12 analyzing the information presented in the
13 Staff report, assessing whether the criteria
14 for designation was actually met. My analysis
15 concluded that the criteria for designation --
16 for historic designation has not been
17 substantiated in the report.

18 As you all know, Section 8-103 of the Coral
19 Gables City Code establishes the criteria for
20 designation of historic structures and
21 districts, and it states, quote, buildings are
22 of national, state or local importance, are of
23 historic significance, that's one of the
24 important words, if they possess integrity of
25 location, design, setting, material,

1 workmanship or association.

2 In order to qualify for designation as a
3 local historic landmark, individual properties
4 must have significant character, interest or
5 value, as part of the historical, cultural,
6 archeological, aesthetics or, in this case,
7 architectural heritage of the city, state or
8 nation.

9 These two initial criteria for evaluating
10 the quality of significance serve as a
11 threshold that a property must meet before
12 proceeding to the next phase of eligibility.
13 Therefore, several critical questions should be
14 asked, when considering this general criteria.
15 Does 1414 -- and I'm not going to use the word,
16 Galiano again -- does 1414, we'll nickname it,
17 meet the initial qualifying criteria for
18 designation? Does 1414 possess integrity of
19 design, setting, materials, workmanship or
20 association? I think the answer is, no.

21 Does this property have significant
22 character, interest or value to qualify for
23 designation? Once again, I think the answer
24 is, no. What does it mean when the City Code
25 says, "Significant character, interest or value

1 to qualify for designation"? The definition of
2 significant, as defined by Dictionary.com -- it
3 depends on what generation you're from, I used
4 Webster -- means -- the definition is,
5 sufficiently great or important to be worthy of
6 attention. Now, the Dictionary.com definition,
7 having or likely to have influence or effect.

8 Does this property have significant
9 character, interest or value to qualify for
10 designation? The answer is an emphatic no.
11 Nothing is great or important enough about this
12 property to be worthy of attention. And the
13 property will not yield or influence or effect
14 or illustrate the course of history.

15 Now, putting the prelude to our Code aside,
16 in addition to meeting those two initial
17 qualifying criteria, 8103 -- 8-103, the
18 eligibility of any potential historic landmark
19 or local historic district shall be based on
20 meeting one of the following criteria listed in
21 that subsection, and Staff has listed three
22 criteria.

23 Let's start with Criteria B, for the
24 moment, regarding the criteria of architectural
25 significance. Criteria 1 is how it is referred

1 to in your designation report. The property is
2 supposed to portray the environment in an era
3 of history characterized by one or more
4 distinctive architectural styles. Staff's
5 summary of significance classifies the property
6 at Mediterranean Transitional style, and
7 describes it as Mediterranean Revival, with
8 Modernistic elements.

9 In the section discussing the second
10 development phase of Coral Gables and
11 Mediterranean Transitional style, Staff
12 mentions that the new construction style being
13 built in Coral Gables between 1927 and 1924
14 encompasses Minimal Traditional, Modernistic
15 Art Deco - Art Moderne, Modern Vernacular, and
16 ranch, and were a departure from the
17 Mediterranean Revival.

18 It seems to me, understandable, that Staff
19 is struggling to determine and describe the
20 identity of the property through -- to its
21 style throughout the designation report.
22 Descriptions and classifications include
23 Mediterranean Transitional style, a/k/a, as I
24 said before, Mediterranean Modern, Med Deco,
25 Mediterranean Transitional, with influences of

1 Art Moderne style, Modernistic style,
2 streamline Moderne Style, Modernistic Art
3 Moderne -- this demonstrates to me that 1414 is
4 genuinely a medley of styles, a hybrid, rather
5 than a defining distinctive architectural
6 style, in the history of the architecture and
7 architectural heritage of Coral Gables.

8 The building possesses features of the
9 Mediterranean Revival style, but its
10 Modernistic influences, like Art Moderne,
11 dilute the architectural integrity associated
12 with that style.

13 In addition to the Art Moderne and
14 Streamline Moderne styles, the property also
15 includes the International style, hence the
16 Modernistic style influences. The so-called
17 Mediterranean Traditional style was, at best, a
18 brief phase, that did not significantly shape
19 the City's identity or long-term architectural
20 trends.

21 1414 does not represent a pivotal movement
22 in Coral Gables architectural evolution. Other
23 buildings from the same era better reflect the
24 transition to Modernistic architecture,
25 reducing the historical significance of this

1 property. Nor does 1414 acknowledge Merrick's
2 desire for a cohesively designed community.
3 More on that later.

4 In the year 2000, the City of Coral Gables
5 commissioned a Janus Research, a very
6 well-respected historic preservation firm at
7 the time, to prepare a Historic Resources
8 Report, to survey all of our historic resources
9 within the City of Coral Gables for future
10 needs, and to propose expanding the Business
11 District. In this report, 1414 is identified
12 as masonry vernacular.

13 Virginia McAlester, author of a book called
14 A Field Guide to American Houses -- kind of one
15 of the definitive books on style -- states that
16 vernacular architecture is more commonly called
17 American Vernacular, 1930 to the present. This
18 style refers to regional architecture that
19 calls -- that recalls an area's architectural
20 heritage. Paraphrasing from her book, "Homes
21 had good bones, were understated, fit easily
22 into any setting, identified features of the
23 style -- of style are simply geometric forms --
24 simple geometric forms, covered porches and
25 balconies, with unadorned porch supports, no

1 fancy columns," no twisted columns, none of the
2 good stuff that we love to look at here,
3 "unadorned railings, uncomplicated roofs and
4 walls, clad with a dominant material. Stylish
5 details are not present."

6 I believe that 1414 Galiano is better
7 classified as Mediterranean Vernacular, which
8 implies a lack of style, as identified by Janus
9 Research in their report. The building
10 represents a conglomeration of styles and is,
11 by no means, distinctive -- a distinctive style
12 of architecture. The property's architecture
13 consequently shifts away -- consciously shifts
14 away from the Mediterranean Revival Style and
15 leans towards the art in Streamline Moderne and
16 International Styles. It is not Mediterranean
17 Traditional, a/k/a Mediterranean Modern or Med
18 Deco, as Staff would have you believe.

19 I have to ask, how many of you have heard
20 of the Mediterranean Transitional Style,
21 Mediterranean Modern, Mediterranean Deco?
22 Well, in my many years as a historic
23 preservation architect, I have never heard of
24 any of these styles described as a distinctive
25 architectural style, which as we all know, is a

1 requirement for historic designation. Masonry
2 vernacular refers to architecture that blends
3 various local and regional styles, as I said
4 before, and due to the resulting mix of
5 non-distinctive elements, Staff is compelled to
6 create a new label for this architectural
7 ambiguity and -- to justify the case for
8 historic designation.

9 To qualify under Criteria 2 -- let's move
10 to Criteria 2 -- the property must embody
11 distinguishing characteristics of a style,
12 period, method of construction, property
13 presents character defining features of the
14 Mediterranean Transitional style, is how Staff
15 reports it. Let's review these features that
16 Staff believes justify this Number 2. Let's
17 review them together and make a decision for
18 ourselves.

19 Crawl space, elevating the building, the
20 multi-family residence, above Florida's low
21 water table, this is not a character defining
22 feature. Thick masonry walls clad in smooth
23 stucco, this is not a character defining
24 feature. A shallow hip roof, with extended
25 eaves and boxed cornices, initially clad with

1 barrel tile, now finished with white cement
2 tile, yes, this did have, once a upon time, the
3 characteristic of a Mediterranean Revival
4 style, the barrel tile, but the property's roof
5 has previously been altered and no longer
6 possess this characteristic.

7 Modernistic corner and porthole windows,
8 porthole windows are a character defining
9 feature of the International style, and
10 porthole windows are part of the Art Moderne
11 style. Features applied and arranged for
12 overall horizontal emphasis, such as the modern
13 beltcourse, regularity of window sizes and
14 placement, wide eaves with boxed cornices,
15 incised horizontal lines, stylized eyebrows, as
16 well as round vents decoratively arranged in a
17 line, none of these are character defining
18 features of the so-called Mediterranean
19 Transitional style. These are character
20 designing features of Modern architecture.

21 Likewise, minimal decorative elements are
22 characteristics of Modern architecture.
23 Two-story bay window with stylized eyebrows
24 that extend to become front and back porch
25 roofs are also not character defined features.

1 This is simply a bay window, with horizontal
2 extensions at the second floor level. This is
3 not a stylized eyebrow.

4 Modernistic front entry, with a curved
5 planter is not a character defining feature.

6 Classic Mediterranean Revival entry and
7 swoop roof, incised lines simulating quoins,
8 molded cornice, and original plank doors,
9 Mediterranean Revival hood with horizontal
10 banding on either side of the entry -- are you
11 kidding me? Modernistic regular window
12 openings, with no sills for lintels, give the
13 appearance of rectangles being cut from a
14 larger cube, again, none of these are character
15 defining features.

16 The summary lists Modern architectural
17 elements, such as smooth stucco, corner
18 windows, porthole window, horizontal banding
19 and minimal decorative elements -- all of these
20 elements listed, except for one, are associated
21 with the Modern style. They are not
22 distinguishing characteristics of a distinctive
23 architectural style. Distinguishing
24 characteristics are defined -- let's try
25 Dictionary.com again -- as those, quote,

1 "Marked by excellence or made conspicuous by
2 excellence," end quote. There is nothing
3 excellent about this property, especially
4 compared to the other properties designed by
5 Paist and Steward. Again, with emphasis, while
6 these features of the Mediterranean Revival and
7 Modernist style are present, they're not, as
8 required, exemplary or particularly distinctive
9 within the larger landscape of George Merrick's
10 Coral Gables.

11 In addition to lacking distinguishing
12 characteristics, the property has several
13 alterations, reducing its integrity. The
14 original steel casement windows were replaced
15 with awning windows in 1970. The original
16 barrel tiles were replaced in 2011 with flat
17 cement tiles. Window AC units are just about
18 everywhere. Metal awnings have been added over
19 all window openings and there's a wooden
20 staircase and a raised deck area in the back,
21 on the north side elevation, that certainly
22 does not do any justice to Paist and Steward.
23 These alterations all downgrade the property's
24 integrity of design, materials and workmanship.

25 Let's talk about Historic and Cultural

1 Significance for a moment, Criteria 4. It
2 would require that the property exemplify the
3 historical, cultural, political, economic and
4 social trends of the community. The property
5 is generally described in the context of the
6 City of Coral Gables Second Development Phase,
7 the aftermath of the '26 Hurricane, the Great
8 Depression, and the New Deal Wartime
9 Activities. Various sections of the report
10 briefly mention the Hurricane and the Great
11 Depression and the New Deal relief. The reader
12 is left to somehow surmise that the property is
13 somehow part of a historical or cultural trend
14 because of these influences.

15 Well, these are hints at essential
16 connections. Staff does not surmise or state
17 how the property exemplifies the community's
18 historical, cultural, political, economic or
19 social trends. For example, yes, a lack of
20 financial wealth and material led to reduced
21 architectural ornamentation. However, there
22 were many other factors at play, which Staff
23 fails to connect or acknowledge.

24 Staff also points to the involvement of
25 notable figures like Phineas Paist and JW

1 Ricketts as evidence of historical
2 significance. While their role in Coral Gables
3 development is absolutely undeniable, 1414
4 Galiano does not singularly exemplify a trend
5 in the City's history that would warrant
6 landmark status. Briefly mentioning the
7 history of the Douglas Section and the impact
8 of the Hurricane and the Great Depression and
9 the New Deal and saying it was designed by
10 Steward is not enough to prove that 1414 was
11 part of a historical, cultural and economic
12 trend.

13 In evaluating this Criteria Number 4
14 professionally, I find that it's not
15 substantiated. Our research has revealed that,
16 at this time in history, more significant and
17 complex factors influenced the changing
18 attitude toward architecture worldwide. For
19 example, the International Congress of Modern
20 Architecture was founded in 1928. Michael
21 remembers back that far. This organization was
22 responsible for a series of events across
23 Europe. And spreading the principles of the
24 modern movement, conferences were held in
25 Switzerland in 1928, in Germany in 1929, in

1 Berlin in 1930, and in 1933, even in Greece.

2 This information informs us that
3 Modernistic architecture promoted this theory
4 before the Great Depression. In 1933, three
5 years before 1414 Galiano was constructed, the
6 Century of Progress International Exhibition
7 was held in Chicago. I certainly remember
8 learning an awful lot of that in my historic of
9 architecture classes. Several articles about
10 Miami-Dade County's participation in the
11 World's Fair have been located. These articles
12 tell us that Paist was the architect in charge
13 of the Florida Exhibition of Buildings, and the
14 exhibition showcased Miami's past and present.

15 Robert Law Weed, Phineas Paist, Harold
16 Steward presented the tropical home at this
17 exposition. The tropical home is truly modern
18 architectural work. It gives us insight into
19 the future of architecture and suggests that
20 the new contemporary architecture influenced
21 Paist and Steward. It is also an exceptional
22 and outstanding example of their work,
23 certainly worthy of its historic designation
24 that it has.

25 This research aims to better understand

1 larger, more significant historical, cultural,
2 political, economic and social trends. It led
3 to the conclusion that much larger forces were
4 at play worldwide influencing architectural
5 design. When 1414 is compared to the
6 outstanding work of Robert Law Weed, Paist,
7 Steward, on display in 1933 in the Chicago's
8 World's Fair, the Florida Home Tomorrow
9 Exhibit, the differences cannot be more
10 striking, casting even more doubt over the
11 supposed historical significance of 1414
12 Galiano.

13 Ruminating over the research, thinking
14 about it a little bit, lead me to question how
15 much of this design can be attributed to the
16 hands and the minds of Paist and Steward. The
17 permit for 1414 was issued in December 1936,
18 and Phineas died just a few short months later,
19 on May 3rd, 1937, after what newspapers called
20 a long illness. This suggests that Steward may
21 have had more influence on this design.

22 It should also be shared that we looked
23 into Steward's architectural training. Now, we
24 know that Paist was an Ecole de Beau Arts
25 graduate. Well, Steward attended Syracuse

1 University, before the start of the Modernist
2 movement. The Syracuse architectural program
3 acknowledges that European Modernism seeped
4 into architectural schools at that time. It is
5 entirely possible that Steward was introduced
6 to the Modernist trend while in school. Many
7 examples of Steward's work, other than 1414,
8 truly exemplify modern architectural styles and
9 are exceptional, including one that we're
10 restoring right now, the Pan American World
11 Headquarters Building at Miami International
12 Airport.

13 Another critical time in history to
14 properly understand how to place Galiano in its
15 historical context is the New Deal Era of Coral
16 Gables. Government funded construction in
17 Coral Gables during the Depression, 1929, 1939,
18 maintained harmony with the City's standards.
19 Although its design in ornamentation were
20 limited, it incorporated elements of the
21 Mediterranean Revival style of architecture
22 familiar to Coral Gables. These buildings
23 comprised the Police and Fire Station, 1939,
24 the Coral Gables Women's Club, 1937, Matheson
25 Hammock Park, Fairchild Tropical Gardens.

1 The Police and Fire station, another
2 Paist and Steward building that we know well,
3 is classified as Mediterranean Revival, with
4 decorative Depression Moderne elements, and The
5 Women's Club is classified as Depression
6 Moderne. I will note the use of Depression
7 Moderne here, an accepted and known distinct
8 architectural style of architecture. WDR
9 architecture, often called PWA Moderne or
10 Depression Moderne, is a style that emerged
11 during the Great Depression and was used in
12 many Public Works project, and the common
13 features were lack of ornamentation, flat
14 barrel roofs, smooth exterior surfaces,
15 vertical fenestration openings, linear building
16 elements, square corners, stone masonry. The
17 Coral Gables Women's Club, a Fink Building, was
18 built in the same year as Galiano, and is
19 listed as Depression Moderne, with
20 Mediterranean elements.

21 Interestingly, in 1950, a Miami Herald
22 article reveals that in 1946 an attempt was
23 made by the Board of Architects to relax the
24 rules to permit modern trends. However, the
25 populus rallied strongly in the defense of the

1 status quo and Mediterranean won over the
2 Moderne. The intent of mentioning the attempt
3 in 1946 was to reinforce the same decision made
4 in 1950 to uphold Merrick's design standards
5 and enforce the Mediterranean style. The same
6 principles are employed today.

7 When evaluating a property for historic
8 designation, it is critical to compare it with
9 similar properties, to understand its context,
10 its integrity. In this case, 1414 is
11 surrounded by superior examples of masonry
12 vernacular or true Modernistic designs, that
13 are all better preserved. Some might say that
14 these are more representative of this movement
15 in architecture. There may be Mediterranean
16 Revival buildings with modern element
17 influences, and there may be modern buildings
18 with Mediterranean Revival elements, but this
19 does not create a new architectural style.

20 1002 and 1010 Douglas Road, and 32 Calabria
21 Avenue are, within the same district, examples
22 of what Staff calls Mediterranean Transitional.
23 So why focus on 1414, which is newer and has
24 far less significance? We conducted a
25 windshield survey of the Douglas District, to

1 understand the composition of architectural
2 styles, and the Douglas District has been
3 described as the Apartment Section since its
4 beginning in 1924. Our survey demonstrated
5 that the Douglas Section is a mix of
6 Mediterranean Revival and Modernistic
7 multi-family homes and apartments.

8 Considering the quality and integrity of
9 other Paist and Steward buildings, the ones
10 you're looking at right now, the same of which
11 you all know by heart, that are designated, it
12 is fair -- is it fair, I ask you, to place 1414
13 Galiano, which does not exemplify a recognized
14 architectural style, on this list, with subpar
15 architectural features, that are not
16 distinctive or distinguishing, without a proper
17 architectural identification or historical
18 context? The answer is, no.

19 Is it fair to place 1414 on the same list
20 as all of the other great works by Paist and
21 Steward, truly significant works, big, small,
22 such as the Douglas Entrance, the Colonnade,
23 the Deering Estate, the Dyre Federal
24 Courthouse, which is out to bid by us right
25 now, the Coral Gables City Hall, or even that

1 wonderful 1101 North Greenway, where I wish we
2 lived? These buildings embody architectural
3 style, reflect architectural trends, and are
4 more deserving of preservation than 1414 will
5 ever be. 1414 pales in comparison, in terms of
6 architectural style and historic significance.
7 In simpler terms, preserving 1414 adds little
8 to no value to the overall historical fabric of
9 Coral Gables, given that other more prominent
10 Paist and Steward buildings are more deserving
11 and already protected in the Douglas Section,
12 North Ponce Apartment District.

13 Based on our detailed analysis, we conclude
14 that 1414, while possessing some elements of
15 architectural and historic interest, does not
16 meet the rigorous criteria necessary for local
17 landmark designation. Specifically, it does
18 not have significant character, interest or
19 value, as part of the historical and cultural
20 and architectural heritage of the City. Its
21 design integrity has been diluted by its
22 unsympathetic additions. Its historical role
23 is more incidental and undistinguished than
24 exemplary and distinctive within the broader
25 Coral Gables architectural narrative.

1 We have demonstrated, beyond a shadow of a
2 doubt, that 1414 is neither exemplary, nor
3 significant enough to merit architectural
4 designation. I recommend that the City
5 consider a more comprehensive evaluation of all
6 of the properties within the Coral Gables
7 Douglas Section District to ensure that only
8 those with exemplary characteristics are
9 designated as historic landmarks. Moreover, I
10 recommend that this Board reject the motion to
11 designate the property at 1414 Galiano Street,
12 and that they ask that -- as a courtesy, that
13 before any demolition take place, that the
14 owner document the building and have sworn maps
15 and those drawings be stored in the City
16 archive in the Police and Fire Station
17 building.

18 Thank you all for the courtesy of your
19 attention. I look forward to your judgment.

20 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Are there any other
21 presentations?

22 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Mr. Chair, I'm going to
23 ask Mr. Bermello to present some testimony. It
24 should be considerably shorter.

25 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Can you make it short?

1 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Yes. It will be about
2 five minutes, and then two minutes for me to
3 wrap it up.

4 So I'll ask Willy to come up now. I'll
5 tell you a little bit about Willy, also. A
6 graduate of the University of Florida School of
7 Architecture, where he graduated Magna Cum
8 Laude and he is now in his 49th year of
9 practicing architecture.

10 The firm he founded, Bermello Ajamil, was
11 recognized as the largest Hispanic owned
12 architectural firm in the United States, a long
13 time Coral Gables resident and one of his first
14 major projects was the restoration of the
15 Merrick House.

16 Willy.

17 MR. BERMELLO: Thank you.

18 Willy Bermello, with address at 4711 South
19 Lejeune Road and residence at 1238 Malaga.

20 I have eight pages of comments, which now
21 are reduced, given the fact that when you
22 follow Richard Heisenbottle, your presentations
23 get abridged very quickly. So I'm just going
24 to share with you just some observations.

25 Calling 1414 Galiano, a property that I

1 lived across from when I lived on Mendoza -- my
2 parents first moved into the Gables in 1963 --
3 to call it a conglomeration is really trying to
4 be nice. It's a combination of bastardized
5 styles. It has really no style to speak of.

6 The report by Janus in the year 2000, I
7 think it's interesting, when it refers to it as
8 masonry vernacular. If I could just read into
9 the record what it actually said. I'll quote
10 it from the report itself. It says, "The term
11 masonry vernacular style is somewhat of a
12 misnomer, as vernacular implies a lack of
13 style. To be more accurate, vernacular
14 buildings are designed without imitating a
15 specific style, but they do reflect stylistic
16 influences. Modest in design, vernacular
17 buildings tend to be simple, largely
18 unornamented and constructed out of readily
19 available materials." It's basically a
20 euphorbism for kind of mediocre, mundane,
21 average, uneventful.

22 The Chairman, when he started his --
23 describing what we're here to decide upon, used
24 the word, "Worthy," and I think words matter.
25 Words are important. Their meaning should

1 matter. If we have to apply that definition of
2 masonry vernacular, I would say, Westchester,
3 Hialeah, Overtown would be masonry vernacular.
4 It would describe all of those areas.

5 I've been an architect for 49 years, and I
6 think what I'm going to say, probably the
7 architects on the Board will relate to, in
8 those 49 years, I have designed, signed and
9 sealed approximately 200 building. Some are
10 award winning, some not. But my firm has been
11 the architect for more than 2,000 projects,
12 with the name Bermello Ajamil, and I will tell
13 you that those other 1,800, more than likely, I
14 didn't even touch.

15 So what my colleague just said about
16 Phineas Paist, who is a phenomenal architect,
17 and his work needs to be preserved, when it's
18 worthy, and he does have many, many worthy
19 examples, this one is not. You have to wonder,
20 if you're about to pass away, dying from
21 respiratory diseases, are you going to be in
22 the board, pushing the pen -- the pencil, at
23 that moment, and getting this work done? So
24 you have to ask yourself, could there have been
25 some other hands, not Steward and not Paist?

1 Because we all know, in our offices, that
2 depending on the size of your office, at least
3 in my, I will tell you that you're not there in
4 everything, at every point in time.

5 So you have to ask yourself, if you have
6 examples that are worthy, that are significant,
7 and all of a sudden you have one -- all you
8 have to do is drive by, do a windshield survey,
9 which doesn't really cut mustard, maybe you're
10 giving credit for something that maybe we
11 should not be giving credit that's well
12 deserved.

13 And one final point, since the Book of
14 Genesis, man has been giving names to things,
15 right? We call a snake, a snake, a tree a
16 tree, the moon, the moon, this is a table or a
17 podium, so it's understandable that when you
18 see something that no one recognizes, you give
19 it a name. So they gave it Mediterranean
20 Transitional, Mediterranean Deco, Mediterranean
21 Modernism, and if we stay long enough, we will
22 probably come up with four or five more, but
23 the question you have to ask yourself, is there
24 anywhere in our Zoning Code, where we celebrate
25 Mediterranean Revival, that's part of our

1 bonus, that you see the words, Mediterranean
2 Transitional, Mediterranean Deco or
3 Mediterranean Moderne, as what any architect
4 can do to get the Med bonuses, because those
5 are the styles to be celebrated and to be
6 preserved? I think not. It's not there.

7 Now, this is not an indictment on Staff. I
8 get it. You have to write about something.
9 You have to describe it, because that's what
10 they're doing. They're trying to record --
11 they're trying to explain to you what they're
12 looking at, but I think that what we're seeing
13 here is a real stretch. It's a real stretch to
14 try to catalog this example of this structure
15 that happened to have a title block of Steward
16 and Paist, as a work, Mr. Chair, that is
17 worthy, and I think that's the test. Is it
18 really worthy, under any one of the categories,
19 culture, archeology, architectural heritage,
20 aesthetics? It doesn't cut the mustard.

21 Thank you very much, and God bless.

22 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Thank you very much,
23 Willy.

24 Mr. Chair and Board Members, based on the
25 testimony presented, I submit that the

1 competent and substantial evidence is that
2 Mediterranean Transitional is not an
3 architectural style. Even if it was an
4 architectural style, 1414 Galiano is not an
5 exemplar of it, especially considering that the
6 City's own previously commissioned analysis of
7 it concluded that it was a masonry vernacular
8 building.

9 And lastly, that 1414 Galiano does not
10 embody the high level of architectural quality
11 to make it a historic landmark. We ask that
12 you vote to deny this proposed designation, and
13 we'll reserve some time, if necessary, to rebut
14 any additional testimony that might be
15 presented into the record.

16 Thank you very much.

17 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Are there any further
18 presentations from Staff or any -- about this?

19 MS. PERNAS: Thank you, all, for your
20 patience, and just to quickly respond to some
21 of the comments that were made.

22 So this was an application, as mentioned,
23 as a historic significance determination letter
24 that was made by the applicant -- by the
25 property owner. We are looking at the

1 significance and the elements of this structure
2 as an independent building within the City's
3 fabric and how that affects the City's historic
4 fabric, taking into consideration, we are not
5 trying to say that this is Phineas Paist's most
6 excellent work, and we recognized that it is
7 different from some of the ones that are more
8 recognized within our City, as our
9 distinguished landmarks or our more stand-alone
10 independent important buildings.

11 As to the style, the Mediterranean
12 Transitional, this is something that has been
13 recognized by the City of Miami Beach. It was
14 also recognized by Janus Research in a 2004
15 survey that was provided to us for the City of
16 Coral Gables, and it is something that we
17 implemented within this application, because it
18 is one of those properties that sits on the
19 cusp of development of architectural changes
20 that was happening within what the City had and
21 what was available to people developing at that
22 time.

23 So we find it to be important as a part of
24 our history, even though it's not our 1920s
25 Mediterranean Revival that we all know and love

1 today, but it's another distinct era of our
2 City that we need to continue to preserve.

3 And with that, I'd like to ask Kara Kautz,
4 the Assistant Preservation Officer, to come up.

5 MR. SILVA: Before -- sorry, Ms. Pernas --

6 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Please, go ahead.

7 MR. SILVA: Could you repeat, again,
8 please, because Mr. Heisenbottle spent a lot of
9 time talking about the 2000 Janus report --

10 MS. PERNAS: Right. So we did -- there was
11 a 2000 Janus report specific to the Douglas
12 Section, the North Ponce Section. We have a
13 separate -- it was a separate report for --
14 remind me of the area, it wasn't Douglas -- it
15 was Alhambra. It was a different report, but
16 it's a recognized style that Janus pointed out
17 to, in that 2004 report.

18 MR. SILVA: That Mediterranean
19 Transitional --

20 MS. PERNAS: Yes. And, also, the City of
21 Miami Beach, its Historic Preservation Office,
22 has also recognized it and they say,
23 "Mediterranean Revival, Art Deco Transitional,
24 Med Deco, 1920 to Mid 1930s."

25 MR. SILVA: Thank you.

1 MS. KAUTZ: Okay. So I just wanted to -- a
2 couple of points -- bring to your attention or
3 remind you, if you're not aware, the City of
4 Coral Gables is a Certified Local Government.
5 It's in your report. It's on like the second
6 page. You probably have skipped over it a
7 thousand times. It's a program administered by
8 the National Parks Service and the State
9 Historic Preservation Office. By registering
10 as a CLG, and the City was one of the first,
11 the City agrees to abide by preservation
12 standards, and the City is obligated, as one of
13 those standards, to tell the story and identify
14 and protect resources that contribute to the
15 story of Coral Gables over time. The history
16 of the City does not stop or freeze in the '20s
17 or with Mediterranean Revival architecture. It
18 continued to evolve. And this is a structure
19 that continued that evolution.

20 The City never wholeheartedly embraced
21 modern styles, like Deco or Moderne, because of
22 how deeply the City was associated with the
23 Mediterranean style. It was and is the basis
24 of the City's identity and change was slow in
25 the City because of that. The architecture is

1 a thoughtful execution to the multi-family
2 residences, that acknowledges the City's Med
3 Revival foundation, while embracing Modernistic
4 aesthetics, as well as the first in the City to
5 usher in that style.

6 The architect repeatedly made reference to
7 the property not being exemplary or notable or
8 superior. A property does not need to be a
9 standout or prime example in order to have
10 significance. It just has to meet the criteria
11 and it does. Nowhere in our Code do we rely on
12 a comparative analysis. Each property is
13 evaluated on its own merit. So because you're
14 comparing it to City Hall does not make it any
15 less worthy of designation. It is, on its own
16 basis, does it meet the criteria outlined in
17 our Code? This property absolutely does.

18 We did not designate based on the architect
19 of the property. It is not cited as one of
20 Phineas Paist's best examples. It was
21 important to note him. He was a member of
22 Merrick's original design team, supervising,
23 and then the City Architect. So he was very
24 familiar with Mediterranean Revival
25 architecture and helped to usher it in. He

1 also knew how important that Mediterranean
2 tradition was to the City, so very thoughtfully
3 incorporating the two, Modern and the Med
4 Revival.

5 So I also wanted to point out, too, that we
6 have in the past designated properties that are
7 Mediterranean Transitional. There are at least
8 six other properties. Doing a quick study,
9 some very recently designated, 2020 -- 2214
10 Segovia was 1935 Med Transitional, also Paist
11 and Steward, designed in 2020; 6808 San
12 Vicente, 1936, also Paist and Steward, designed
13 in 2016; and we also have others. There's one
14 at 3317 Toledo that was designated in 1997,
15 that calls out the importance of this
16 transitional architecture to this City.

17 So I just wanted to bring that to your
18 attention. This is not a new request that's
19 come before this Board.

20 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

21 MS. KAUTZ: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Is there anything
23 additional by Staff at this time?

24 Okay. You're going to finish up?

25 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Yeah. If I could just

1 have about a one minute rebuttal to discuss,
2 you know, what was mentioned right now.

3 But an important clarification on the
4 reports and the historic surveys, there's one
5 in 2000 by Janus. That's the one that
6 identified 1414 Galiano as masonry vernacular.
7 There's apparently another report, four years
8 later, 2004, which discusses the Mediterranean
9 Transitional Style, but I'm not clear if -- I
10 don't believe 1414 Galiano is part of that
11 discussion.

12 The fact that Coral Gables is a Certified
13 Local Government, I think we're all well aware.
14 We just don't think that 1414 Galiano is part
15 of that story of Coral Gables over the history
16 of this City.

17 Lastly, we're also aware that the building
18 does not have to be a great work, by a noted
19 architect, in order to be determined to be
20 historically significant, but it does need to
21 be significant, and that's what we're talking
22 about. We simply do not think it rises to the
23 level of significance.

24 Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

1 Are there any presentations in support, on
2 behalf of this project, from the audience or on
3 Zoom?

4 THE SECRETARY: Yes. We have somebody on
5 Zoom.

6 MS. PERNAS: I also did circulate the
7 public comment that was received in advance of
8 the meeting to the Board and there were letters
9 of support for the designation, and if you'd
10 like, I can read out the names, but I'll let
11 them speak on Zoom and come back.

12 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Let the Zoom person and
13 then read them later. Thank you.

14 MS. THROCKMORTON: Mr. Chair, while we
15 bring this individual up on the screen, I don't
16 believe they were sworn in earlier, so if they
17 could please have their camera on and be sworn
18 in by the court reporter before they testify.

19 They need to be sworn in, the person -- oh,
20 no, he was. He was.

21 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: You're on.
22 Hello.

23 MS. CARBONELL: Yeah, I'm on the phone.
24 I'm not --

25 MS. THROCKMORTON: Ms. Carbonell, we're

1 hearing from someone else at the moment.

2 Please hold on.

3 MS. CARBONELL: Okay. Sorry. Okay.

4 MR. ADAMS: Hi. My name is Alex Adams. I
5 live at 50 Minorca. I live about five blocks
6 from this site, and my parents actually lived a
7 block from this site. I'm very familiar with
8 the neighborhood. I love playing at Phillips
9 Park there and so I'm invested in this
10 neighborhood and rooted in the area, what's
11 best for our City.

12 I am also a Former Head Board Member as you
13 there today, and Former Preservation Officer
14 for the City of Miami. Actually, I just had
15 the City Manager and other Staff in the
16 neighborhood, around this site yesterday,
17 asking for general cleanup in the neighborhood
18 and looking to really make, you know, Coral
19 Gables as great as it could be. And I'm going
20 to be very clear and concise. I've spent, you
21 know, over an hour on this call, and I
22 appreciate all of the information, but I don't
23 think it's that complicated.

24 I look at this structure, compared to the
25 last one presented here today, and there's no

1 comparison. I look at this structure, compared
2 to the walk-up apartments in this general area,
3 there's some great examples and there's no
4 comparison. Or even the other buildings on
5 this block, that were previously considered
6 historic and weren't developed by Phineas Paist
7 and others.

8 We do not want to start designating
9 hodgepodge of styles. This is the only thing
10 that recreates the sense of place in Coral
11 Gables. You can go anywhere -- anywhere in
12 South Florida -- and see hodgepodge. You can
13 go anywhere in the City of Miami and see, you
14 know, one facade looks one way and one facade
15 looks the other way, and we're not quite sure
16 what we were thinking in that day, and I hate
17 to come up here, and, you know, object against
18 what Staff reports. They're usually the
19 champions for our historic preservation in this
20 City, and we really value the historic feel,
21 but not just to be historic, not just to be
22 forty years old, but that it really creates the
23 sense of place of Coral Gables.

24 So I would ask you one question, which is,
25 does this create this sense of place of Coral

1 Gables? Is this an example that we want to
2 preserve and that we want to look back on and
3 say that was a great piece, whether it's of
4 architecture of a person, of a time period, of
5 a neighborhood? There are many, many, many
6 other better pieces in this neighborhood in
7 which I live. We don't want to start
8 describing things as, quote, a melding of
9 architectural styles or a combination, multiple
10 types on each facade.

11 I would argue with you that probably the
12 most historic feature on this site is the
13 accessory dwelling unit. That was ahead of its
14 time. It's something we talk about today,
15 granny flats. It's actually a stable style of
16 its own. That's probably the best thing on
17 this site. And this area of the City, like I
18 said, I live in it, it needs redevelopment.
19 This area -- we're stifling development in the
20 North Ponce area of Coral Gables, and I almost
21 feel like Mr. Heinsenbottle may have seen my
22 notes here -- I wasn't there personally, but --
23 because I wrote here that I was going to
24 suggest that this Board ask -- and I know it's
25 been done before -- to do a holistic study of

1 this North Ponce area, because it's unfair for
2 developers. It's unfair.

3 There's two lots just north of here, on
4 Antilla, and I've looked at them myself, other
5 developers. They're not going to look at those
6 sites, because one of them, out of the two --
7 there are two owned by different people, but we
8 don't -- you don't know what's going to happen.
9 You can't reasonably forecast what's the value
10 of this site. We need to stick to -- back to
11 the architecture, not development -- we need to
12 stick to pure architectural styles and
13 examples. We need to designate the best.

14 I agree, you know, something can be
15 significant, if it's in a historic district,
16 something can be contributing, which is another
17 word to say it's good enough, but not great,
18 but if we're going to have individual
19 designations, it should be great. I disagree.
20 It should be great. I really do. It should.
21 And we have great examples in Coral Gables.
22 This is one of the best places.

23 So I don't want to cheapen other existing
24 historic buildings, and this is a cheap
25 knockoff. It's a tear down and this is not an

1 example that this neighborhood wants to
2 preserve. Please do not freeze our
3 neighborhood. And that's all I have to say.

4 Thank you very much.

5 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

6 MR. ADAMS: And thank you for your time.

7 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Do we have other people
8 on Zoom?

9 THE SECRETARY: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Have they been sworn in?

11 MS. THROCKMORTON: As a reminder, if
12 someone is not able to appear on camera and be
13 sworn in, it should not be considered as sworn
14 testimony, but, rather, just public comment for
15 this Board's consideration.

16 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. Great. Go ahead,
17 then.

18 THE SECRETARY: Ms. Carbonell --

19 MS. CARBONELL: Yes. Hello -- yes, I'm
20 here.

21 This is Karelia Carbonell and I am
22 president of the Historic Preservation
23 Association of Coral Gables. And you have our
24 letter of support for 1414 Galiano. And I do
25 have some additional comments.

1 And I've been listening, obviously, to the
2 expert, and with all due respect for
3 Mr. Heisenbottle, I do respect all of his
4 research, but, you know, I must say that this
5 whole thing about this home, you know, just
6 being a unicorn -- well, not -- the duplex
7 being a unicorn and that this style, you know,
8 obviously, you know, not an official style and
9 now obviously we know that it is an official
10 style, it was referred to on the Janus report,
11 and, you know, there are other properties
12 designated as Mediterranean Transitional.

13 According to the very well researched staff
14 report, this home is part of a very unique era
15 of architecture, and I think it speaks very
16 well about the Mediterranean Transitional,
17 because if you go back to the evolving of
18 styles, it really transitioned into -- the
19 architecture was transitioning into a more Art
20 Moderne, Art Deco, but this retained some of
21 that Mediterranean.

22 So it is a very important style, and I
23 believe maybe -- you know, according to the
24 Staff report, there are other homes -- I think,
25 a few other homes, under this style, but this

1 would be one more home, and we should not take
2 away from that, and I feel like all of the
3 presentation was taking away from that
4 importance. Architectural style, although they
5 are different -- and Coral Gables is not just
6 about Mediterranean. We are inclusive with
7 many unique styles. We even have Brutalist in
8 our city. We have our Modern Contemporary.
9 And so to say that because this style is, you
10 know, Mediterranean Transitional, it shouldn't
11 count, please. And, again, take into
12 consideration that, you know, this is the
13 battle of experts, and, you know, and I really
14 appreciate the City Staff putting together this
15 very, very important presentation and report.

16 And, you know, about a hodgepodge type of,
17 you know, architectural style, you know, we're
18 very -- I believe that's why Coral Gables is so
19 unique. It's because we -- you know, we were
20 founded on Mediterranean, but we've evolved
21 into many other styles, and we appreciate all
22 of those styles. Like children, we appreciate
23 all of our unique children.

24 So, with that, please take into
25 consideration and don't dismiss that this home

1 or this duplex, this property, not only was
2 designed by one of the most prominent -- two
3 prominent architects, Phineas Paist and Howard
4 Steward, but it is a style of the era. It is
5 part of the historical era of Coral Gables.

6 So thank you, and, you know, I hope the
7 home gets designated.

8 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

9 Are there any other -- anything else?
10 Okay. Is there anything else from anyone in
11 the audience that wishes to speak in favor or
12 against this proposal?

13 MS. PERNAS: Just for the record, to read
14 in the names so that we -- the letters of
15 support we received.

16 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Please.

17 MS. PERNAS: The letters were from Ileana
18 Sayre, Christine Rupp, on behalf of the Dade
19 Heritage Trust, Karelia Carbonell, on behalf of
20 HPACG, Jaime and Zully Pardo, and Mr. Brett
21 Gillis.

22 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. Is there anyone
23 that wrote against?

24 MS. PERNAS: No.

25 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

1 Okay. Hearing that there's no other
2 presentations or other comments, we're going to
3 close the public hearing and we're going to
4 take this back to the Board.

5 Board, you've heard a lot today.

6 Mr. Garcia-Pons.

7 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Sure.

8 I have a question for Staff. Can I do that
9 now?

10 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Please.

11 MR. GARCIA-PONS: So this is a question for
12 Staff. We've heard presentations regarding the
13 Mediterranean Transitional style, and I know
14 that we've talked about it before. The
15 information that is in the Staff report, is
16 that the extent of what is in the City's
17 definition of what the Mediterranean
18 Transitional style is?

19 MS. PERNAS: So we don't have anything
20 specific to like the Transitional style. I
21 think this a summary of what the architectural
22 style is, though, to give it context within the
23 report.

24 MR. GARCIA-PONS: And was it based on --

25 MS. PERNAS: It's based off the information

1 that we've -- the research through all of the
2 references that we have in our report, and then
3 using the context from the other reports that
4 we've received from Janus, Miami Beach, and
5 then putting together the clues of what that
6 transition looked like from Mediterranean
7 Revival and the more modern architecture.

8 MR. GARCIA-PONS: The references that you
9 mentioned, do those other entities have a
10 written definition of what Mediterranean
11 Transitional styles are? Do they have a
12 graphic? Like we've seen a lot of these
13 architectural styles described.

14 MS. PERNAS: So the page that I have from
15 the Miami Beach website has a brief
16 description. Would you like for me to read
17 it --

18 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Sure. Please.

19 MS PERNAS: -- or just note that it's there?

20 Okay. So they say, "The Mediterranean
21 Revival, Art Deco Traditional, Med Deco," in
22 parenthesis, "Circa Late 1920s to Mid 1930s,
23 Med Deco in Ocean Beach was a synthesis or
24 Mediterranean Revival Form and Art Deco
25 decorative detail. This unique hybrid style

1 became a fascinating bridge between the
2 familiar and the new, as the allure of Art Deco
3 found its way into the Beach's architectural
4 vocabulary. Clear ziggurat roof lines and
5 crisp geometric detailing replaced scrolled
6 parapets, bracketed cornices and classical
7 features of the structures of clear
8 Mediterranean Revival form. Likewise, sloped
9 barrel tile roofs rested gracefully on edifices
10 with spectacular Art Deco entrances and facade
11 treatments.

12 "Some of the most celebrated architects in
13 Miami Beach designed structures in this brief
14 lived style, including VH Nelinbogen
15 (phonetic), Henry Hohauser and T. Hunter
16 Henderson. The predominant exterior materials
17 of Med Deco was smooth stucco, with raised or
18 incised details. Featured stucco areas were
19 often patterned on scored. Keystone, either
20 natural or filled and colored, was frequently
21 used to define special elements. Windows range
22 from wood and street casement to wood double
23 hung," and then some examples of their
24 contributing structures in the style include
25 344 Ocean Beach Apartments, 201 -- well, I'm

1 not going to keep going.

2 MR. GARCIA-PONS: That's perfect. Thank
3 you.

4 MS. CUERVO DUNAJ: May I ask a follow-up to
5 that?

6 So I noticed that on Page 29 of the report,
7 you have listed character defining features of
8 the Mediterranean Transitional style as it
9 relates to this property. Were you referring
10 to those resources when you made this list of
11 the character defining --

12 MS. PERNAS: Yes, and similar to the same
13 list that we use for Mediterranean Revival.

14 MS. SPAIN: And I have another follow-up.
15 When you just read that, was that from
16 something that was written about this style in
17 one of their reports? Was it from an e-mail
18 that you received?

19 MS. PERNAS: This is specifically from the
20 Miami Beach website, what I read about the
21 Mediterranean Revival style.

22 MS. SPAIN: And I think that should be
23 added to the --

24 MS. PERNAS: Record?

25 MS. SPAIN: -- the record.

1 MS. PERNAS: Yeah.

2 MR. BANOS: Through the Chair, another
3 follow-up.

4 So Mr. Heisenbottle made a point to,
5 essentially, the many modifications that have
6 been done to this building since its inception,
7 okay, which, in his reading of the record and
8 just looking specifically at this property -- I
9 sort of get upset that we're comparing it with
10 everything else. If we're going to look at the
11 property, let's look at the property, right?

12 MS. PERNAS: Uh-huh.

13 MR. BANOS: That there were things that
14 were taken away, that have been modified, that,
15 essentially, at this point in time, don't make
16 it any particular style. Can you sort of
17 answer that point? Why do you think that the
18 fact that there is no barrel -- the barrel tile
19 is not there anymore, there's the addition of
20 this access staircasing on the side, which was
21 not original to the structure, there was the
22 addition of the awning. I mean, you can take
23 the awnings off, but the modifications of the
24 windows, all of those things. I mean, you
25 could restore the property, but how is that --

1 how do you answer his position?

2 MS. PERNAS: So, every meeting, we
3 designate buildings that have had
4 modifications. These buildings are nearly a
5 hundred years old. There's going to be changes
6 to the structures, some reversible, some that
7 are not. In this case, the footprint of the
8 building, the massing of the building, the
9 material of the building, mostly is intact, the
10 window openings, the door openings. The form
11 of the building is there. Changes to windows
12 are common and reversible. Those awnings --
13 the shutter that were installed can be removed.
14 The roof tiles -- has it been -- if it were to
15 be designated and a roof permit was pulled, we
16 would request and require that it go back to
17 its original roof material.

18 So there are ways to bring these details
19 that we list in our character defining features
20 back to the building.

21 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Mr. Silva?

22 MR. SILVA: Just one more question, Ms.
23 Pernas, if you don't mind. Referencing the
24 same thing -- I'm very comfortable with the
25 roofing and massing and the masonry opening and

1 the windows, for the reasons you just
2 described.

3 I did have a question, though. It's
4 unclear to me, looking at the original permit
5 drawings, there was some stucco striations that
6 seemed to be original, and there was a very
7 thinness to that porch overhang that was
8 original, as well.

9 Sometimes we see the original drawings
10 we're not followed during construction, so it
11 was never built like that. Is this a case
12 where that happened? Do you know? Like that
13 kind of parapet that was stuck on the porch
14 overhang --

15 MS. PERNAS: I wasn't there during
16 construction, but -- so we referenced a lot
17 what -- the circa 1940s photos, because it is
18 relatively the most recent photo we would have
19 on file for it, to see. So some changes may
20 have been made at the time of construction, and
21 others -- you know, I think some of the things
22 that you read, like -- and it was mentioned in
23 the report, too, is that it was painted a
24 little bit different. Once you paint the
25 building all one color, you're not going to

1 really see some of those details as prominent
2 as you do in that 1940s photo. And these are
3 hundred year old buildings that, you know --
4 close to, that change over time.

5 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Ms. Alvarez, do you have
6 a question?

7 MS. ALVAREZ: No, not at this time.

8 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Mr. Maxwell, I had
9 something -- there was a lot of follow-ups to
10 my first question.

11 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Please, go ahead.

12 MR. GARCIA-PONS: So I think my vote isn't
13 really predicated on architectural
14 significance, but I just want the Historic
15 Preservation Officer to state overtly that
16 Mediterranean Transitional is a distinctive
17 architectural style within the City of Coral
18 Gables.

19 MS. PERNAS: So do you --

20 MR. GARCIA-PONS: I want you to say that it
21 is or it isn't.

22 MS. PERNAS: Oh, yes, it is.

23 MR. GARCIA-PONS: So the Historic
24 Preservation Officer --

25 MS. PERNAS: Yes. We recognize it as a

1 distinct style for the City of Coral Gables.

2 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Okay. So that's the end
3 of that one question.

4 Now, I don't have a question for Staff. I
5 have more of a comment for the Board, in case
6 anybody wants to ask questions.

7 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. Ms. Dunaj, did
8 you have another question?

9 MS. CUERVO DUNAJ: I'm good, thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. Mr. Silva?
11 Javier.

12 MR. BANOS: Not for them. I would like to
13 talk to Mr. Heisenbottle, but I don't know --

14 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Mr. Banos, do you have a
15 question?

16 MR. BANOS: I wanted to talk to Mr.
17 Heisenbottle, not to Staff. So I just want to
18 know if we're going to do a round --

19 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Go ahead. Ask your
20 question.

21 MS. PERNAS: Anything else for me?

22 MR. BANOS: Sir, so on Criterion 2, you
23 made a point to sort of diminish this holistic
24 significance of the building, but the Staff
25 goes out of its way to talk about the period

1 itself, okay, and that is part of the Criterion
2 2 that we can also consider. And it's an or,
3 right. It could be one of the things that can
4 be considered separately.

5 So they have gone out of their way just to
6 simplify that for this period, you know, post
7 Hurricane, post Great -- part of the Great
8 Depression, the -- there was a transition and
9 the building was designed in a way that it was
10 simpler, because of just the nature of the
11 material.

12 Why is this not a period -- why is this
13 building not a good example of that period and
14 that style and why should we not designate it,
15 because it's part of a period in Coral Gables
16 that is unique to the area?

17 MR. HEISENBOTTLE: This building is a
18 conglomeration of styles. We very deliberately
19 used comparative styles in our presentation to
20 you guys, highlighted those, from the Modern to
21 the Deco and pretty much everything in between,
22 and we found all of that in this sort of
23 conglomeration of 1414, and that's why we
24 believe 1414 does not meet the criteria of the
25 Code, which calls for a distinctive

1 architectural style.

2 It's an everything style, all conglomerated
3 together, and in spite of what my good friend,
4 Anna, over there -- and I mean that
5 sincerely -- said to you, it's not written
6 anywhere in the Code of the City of Coral
7 Gables. It's not mentioned as a style either.
8 Yes, the City of Miami Beach has it listed as a
9 style in one of their Historic Districts, but
10 this is not what the Code requires you to
11 judge. It requires just to have a distinctive
12 architectural style. Is it distinctive? No,
13 it's a conglomeration.

14 We see lots of buildings, from here to
15 Hialeah, that are conglomerations of different
16 styles, a little of this and a little of that,
17 and that's exactly what we think is wrong with
18 designating this. It doesn't have the
19 integrity.

20 MR. BANOS: Okay. That answers my
21 question.

22 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

23 MR. BANOS: Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

25 Any further discussion?

1 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yeah. I have discussion
2 for the Board. This isn't a question for
3 anybody.

4 So I think, putting aside architectural
5 style, I believe -- I think Mr. Banos was
6 talking about the -- embodies the architectural
7 period, and I would tend to agree with the
8 architectural period being of significance,
9 which is Architectural Significance, Number 2,
10 as well as historic, cultural significance of
11 the economic trends of the time, right.

12 I think, regardless of the hodgepodge of
13 architecture, regardless of the style, the fact
14 that there is a duplex of a style designed as a
15 residential home, on a major corner, with two
16 fronts, that has some harkening of the
17 evolution of an architectural style, is
18 interesting architecture. I think the word was
19 interesting. I agree, it's interesting. But
20 the fact that it is an example -- a very good
21 example of what happened in that slide that
22 showed the construction from the 1920s, all of
23 the way to the 1930s, when it was flat, the
24 economy of that time and the social trends of
25 that time and the architectural period itself,

1 it's obvious to me, and I think, as Kara
2 mentioned in the beginning of the presentation,
3 it doesn't have to be the best of everything,
4 it just has to meet those criteria, and it's
5 hard for me not to see those two things.

6 I could probably be dissuaded of one of the
7 three, but two of the three seems pretty clear
8 to me.

9 MS. CUERVO DINAJ: I'd like to jump in --

10 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Please.

11 MS. CUERVO DUNAJ: -- because I feel the
12 same way, that Staff met standards for two of
13 the criteria, basically, because we never rely
14 upon a comparative analysis, Number 1. So even
15 though I know the argument's been made that
16 other buildings from the era better exemplify
17 this architectural moment, we just have to look
18 at this building as it stands on its own, and I
19 also look at this as an important transitional
20 phase. I believe periods of transition can
21 also be very significant.

22 MS. SPAIN: I have comments.

23 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Ms. Spain.

24 MS. SPAIN: Okay. So Mr. Heisenbottle, I
25 think you're just flat out wrong. I apologize.

1 I consider you a friend. But I've always been
2 fascinated with this style. When I first came
3 to Coral Gables, before I started working for
4 the City, I drove around the City and noticed
5 that there were these buildings that had
6 Mediterranean and Modern -- Art Moderne. You
7 pointed out the one on North Greenway.

8 I think it absolutely is an architectural
9 style. It's prevalent in a snapshot of time in
10 Coral Gables that's important to the history of
11 Coral Gables, and I think that it's -- I
12 absolutely think that the architectural style
13 is important to the history of Coral Gables,
14 that's Number One.

15 There is a criteria, that it is also an
16 architectural significance, that says it's an
17 outstanding work of a prominent designer or
18 builder. Staff didn't qualify that as this.

19 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Right.

20 MS. SPAIN: And so that whole argument
21 escapes me. And, also, I don't think we need
22 to compare it to other buildings, but we
23 certainly don't need to compare it to the very
24 large civic buildings that were shown in the
25 presentation, because it's just not applicable.

1 And, also, I thought it was interesting
2 that you showed that 1950s argument of the
3 architects, and I believe that those were the
4 architects on the Board of Architects, that
5 wanted to switch to a more modern style, and
6 they appeared before a City Commission in Coral
7 Gables, and I did the research on that when I
8 was the Preservation Officer, and there's a
9 whole file about it, because I was also
10 fascinated with that.

11 H. George Fink was a member of that, that
12 appeared before the Commission, and wanted to
13 be more modern, and the fact that the City
14 didn't embrace that, I think that's even more
15 reason why this snapshot in time that has this
16 transitional style is important to the history
17 of the Gables, because it was in the scope of
18 all of the buildings done in Coral Gables, that
19 there may be less of those available.

20 So I think we need to save all that are
21 there, and I think this is an excellent example
22 of it.

23 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

24 Ms. Alvarez, Mr. Banos, anything further?

25 Anything further? Mr. Silva.

1 MR. BANOS: I want to hear what you have to
2 say.

3 MR. SILVA: So, Mr. Heisenbottle started
4 his presentation saying that the building has
5 to pass the significance test, right. It has
6 to be worthy of attention. And I think
7 something we're struggling with is that -- it's
8 not a question, just a comment, Mr. Heisen --
9 is that this style of architecture is
10 specifically designed to be modest and to not
11 call attention to itself, because it is an
12 embodiment kind of this Depression era and cost
13 cutting and more modest, and we shouldn't be
14 comparing it, as Ms. Spain said, to these more
15 civic buildings, that should be more important
16 and should read more in the fabric of the City.

17 So that being said, I think that this does
18 embody kind of a moment in the history of the
19 City that needs its story told, this transition
20 in time, right, when architects -- you can
21 clearly see it in a building -- are struggling
22 with this transition from Mediterranean
23 Revival, getting influenced by the Tropical
24 Conference, by the 1928 Conference. We've seen
25 all of these things, and there -- you know, we

1 didn't get from the horse to nuclear power,
2 right. There were steps in between. We went
3 to steam, went to electric.

4 And these buildings are a visual history of
5 that, right. So I think that they are
6 important, and I think that that fact falls
7 under Criterion A-4, which is, exemplifies the
8 historical, cultural, political, economic or
9 social trends of the community, right.

10 The issue of style is -- I think there is a
11 Mediterranean Transitional style, but in all
12 honesty, I think that we need to define that a
13 little better moving forward, right, because,
14 if not, we're going to kind of keep having this
15 same discussion over and over, and we need
16 to -- for the future, we need to do exactly
17 what you suggested, right, and what you
18 suggested Mr. Bermello and what you suggested
19 Mr. -- to go back and look and do a
20 comprehensive analysis and kind of come up with
21 concrete guidelines for buildings that maybe
22 don't qualify under other criteria. I do
23 believe that this one does qualifies under A-4,
24 at least.

25 The building itself has been modified,

1 agreed. The windows have been changed. The
2 tiles have been changed. And these buildings
3 have such simplicity to them, that any change
4 gets magnified, which is an issue, but these
5 changes can be handled, right. A roof has a
6 life style that is hopefully -- a lifespan that
7 is less than the lifespan of a building. So as
8 we replace the roof, we can replace it with an
9 appropriate material, if it is designated
10 today, the same with the windows, but what
11 cannot be so easily changed massing, masonry
12 openings and things like that, and this
13 buildings does preserve those in their
14 entirety, almost pristinely, from what I can
15 see.

16 So I do think we can do some more work
17 moving forward on these, but I do believe that
18 this building -- I definitely believe that this
19 period needs to be -- it's a significant period
20 and that the style is a significant style.

21 I'm comfortable designating it under
22 Criteria A-4, and moving forward, if we clearly
23 design what the style is -- means, I'll be
24 comfortable designating under additional
25 criteria.

1 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Very good.

2 Mr. Banos, do you have another comment?

3 MR. BANOS: I love to be the odd man out in
4 this group. So I'm not as learned in
5 architecture as the rest of you. My concern
6 with this particular property, and what I was
7 hoping to hear from Mr. Heisenbottle, that for
8 whatever reason, there was some argument that
9 there wasn't a unique period or wasn't part of
10 the unique period for this City.

11 The concern I have is, the building itself
12 is just too generic, okay. The way -- maybe
13 the simplistic aspect of it, I think, is being
14 modified significantly, and, you know, just
15 looking at it -- exclusively just looking at
16 our period, not entirely sure that it's
17 distinctive enough or has a particular style,
18 especially a style that the Staff report, you
19 know -- if a billigerent could look at that
20 report and plug holes through that particular
21 designation and that particular classification,
22 because of -- you know, one of the things that
23 it exemplified in that document, you have all
24 of those yellow characterizations in which you
25 have the same idea named in a multitude of

1 ways, okay.

2 So, in order for us to approve that report,
3 at least as it stands today, at least to rely
4 on it in order for us to designate, we have to
5 very tightly determine that what is the nature
6 of this style, so that it would not subject it
7 to the argument on the part of Mr. Heisenbottle
8 that this is just an amalgamation of different
9 criteria, okay, because -- and it has to be a
10 situation where it is beyond reproach, the
11 notion of this is an absolutely example of
12 whatever that may be.

13 From my estimation, reading the report that
14 I received, for someone who's a layman, who
15 doesn't have, perhaps, the -- you know, who's
16 looking at it as an attorney, as opposed to
17 looking at it perhaps as an architect, it's not
18 sufficient competent evidence for me to make a
19 determination as to whether or not I should be
20 making a determination of us -- the property.

21 The only way that I may get there is about,
22 okay, for this period of post the war, it might
23 be a simplification of that, but there has to
24 be a clear definition of that, in order to get
25 there. To approve the designation under that

1 particular classification, under this report, I
2 am afraid that we're very susceptible to the
3 decision of this Board being overturned okay.

4 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

5 MR. BANOS: So that's a concern I have. I
6 will be a no vote -- at least a vote for denial
7 of this particular designation, because -- at
8 least because of the way it was presented to us
9 and the classification as it was presented. I
10 understand my colleagues may disagree with me,
11 but that's what I turned into. I just don't
12 think I've received sufficient competent
13 evidence for me to make a determination that
14 clearly, evidently, without objection, modifies
15 the rights of this applicant, okay, to the
16 nature of this property, that limits his
17 ability to do X, Y, Z with his property rights,
18 and it ultimately may do a detriment to the
19 overall historic designation in this City, if
20 we are not tight on that end.

21 So if we build a record that makes sense,
22 if we build a record that is complete, I'm
23 happy to vote for it, okay. I'm just -- I
24 don't think I'm there.

25 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

1 MS. CUERVO DINAJ: Mr. Chair, can I make
2 one final quick comment?

3 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Yes, please.

4 MS. CUERVO DINAJ: From a legal standpoint,
5 I believe there is substantial competent
6 evidence in the record, as detailed by Staff,
7 to support designation, and that's just my
8 opinion.

9 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

10 Is there any other comments from the Board?
11 If not, The Chair will make a comment.

12 The Chair's comment is as follow,
13 Mediterranean architecture is made up of
14 Italian, made up of Spanish, it's made up of
15 German, it's made up of many things. All
16 architecture is made up of multiple styles of
17 architecture which preceded it.

18 You know, the testimony today has sought to
19 denigrate a style that was done in a time of,
20 shall we say, severe economic hardship, and we
21 know that all styles that are done in economic
22 hardship suffer details. So this house, this
23 particular property, meets the criteria of
24 being of its time and of a style that has
25 evolved to suit the Mediterranean requirement

1 of the City of Coral Gables at that time with
2 the more modern appearance, and so I believe
3 that it meets the criteria of what we have.

4 So, with that, I'd like to close the Board
5 Meeting and we'll move to a vote.

6 MR. GARCIA-PONS: No. We need a motion.

7 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Oh, we need a motion,
8 yes.

9 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Mr. Chairman, can I make
10 a motion?

11 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: So I'd like to entertain
12 a motion. Mr. Garcia Pons.

13 MR. GARCIA-PONS: So before I make the
14 motion, I'd love that qualified experienced
15 people can disagree and I think the
16 presentation by the owner's consultants was
17 fantastic, so thank you for that, and I'm going
18 to make a very surgical motion, so please
19 listen to the words carefully and see if you
20 agree or not or have a friendly amendment.

21 Motion to approve the Local Historic
22 Designation of the property at 1414 Galiano
23 Street based on the historical, cultural and
24 architectural significance, specifically that
25 it exemplifies the historical, economic and

1 social trend of the community and it embodies
2 the distinguishing characteristics of an
3 architectural period. That's my motion.

4 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Is that clear, for the
5 record?

6 MS. THROCKMORTON: I believe so.

7 MS. CUERVO DUNAJ: I will second.

8 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. We have a motion
9 by Mr. Garcia-Pons and a second for Ms. Dunaj.
10 I'd like to call the roll.

11 MR. GARCIA-PONS: No. Any discussion?

12 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Oh, any further
13 discussion, excuse me? I'm moving ahead of
14 myself.

15 MR. BANOS: We do need to have discussion,
16 if that motion is --

17 MR. GARCIA-PONS: So that is the motion.

18 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Yeah. Motion is
19 accepted, so -- further discussion, Mr. Banos?

20 MR. BANOS: No. I think --

21 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Anyone else?

22 MR. BANOS: I think that -- I take
23 Mr. Garcia-Pons' perspective well. I just
24 don't -- I politely disagree and I just don't
25 see -- in order for the period to be

1 identified, to be a particular -- to be a
2 period that has a unique style to it, I think
3 there has to be a description of a style that,
4 in my mind, is sufficient enough to get there.

5 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

6 MR. GARCIA-PONS: It doesn't say style.
7 Architectural period.

8 MR. BANOS: Period. I apologize.

9 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Please.

10 MR. BANOS: It has to be a period that has
11 a description that this property is an example
12 of that period.

13 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: You have made your
14 point. Thank you. Okay.

15 MR. BANOS: I just politely disagree, but
16 that's --

17 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Any further discussion?

18 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Well, sorry, Mr. Chair,
19 is there a friendly amendment that you wish to
20 make?

21 MR. BANOS: No. No. No. I'll leave it to
22 your -- I think, if it's going to survive,
23 that's the best motion that can be made.

24 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay.

25 MS. SPAIN: I would like you to add the

1 third criteria, because this --

2 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: This is an amendment
3 you'd like to add?

4 MS. SPAIN: Yes. I would like to amend it,
5 to add the third criteria, and the reason being
6 that you only need one. I mean, if we end up
7 designating this and it goes on appeal and the
8 Commission doesn't feel as if the architecture
9 style is there, which I would disagree with,
10 but they consider to just designate it on the
11 other two, but -- I don't know.

12 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Go ahead.

13 MR. SILVA: Mr. Chair, may I?

14 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Please.

15 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Wait.

16 MS. SPAIN: No, I'm done.

17 MR. SILVA: Ms. Spain, I appreciate that
18 and I'm on the fence about that style issue.

19 MS. SPAIN: Yeah.

20 MR. SILVA: The reason I think you made a
21 very good motion is because it eliminates that
22 points of doubt, right.

23 MS. SPAIN: It eliminates the controversy.

24 MR. SILVA: And we all know that if it goes
25 to appeal and there's one speck of doubt,

1 they're going to harp on that and harp on that
2 and I think --

3 MS. SPAIN: I think you're right.

4 MR. SILVA: And I think it's important to
5 be clear and to base our motion and our
6 decision on fact, and I think that factually we
7 can say what Mr. Garcia-Pons' motion --

8 MS. SPAIN: All right. Then I withdraw my
9 amendment.

10 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. All right.

11 So is there any further discussion? We
12 have a motion and a second on the table.

13 All right. We'll call the roll now,
14 please.

15 THE SECRETARY: Ms. Alvarez?

16 MS. ALVAREZ: Yes.

17 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Durana?

18 MR. DURANA: Yes.

19 THE SECRETARY: Ms. Spain?

20 MS. SPAIN: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Banos?

22 MR. BANOS: No.

23 THE SECRETARY: Let's see, Ms. Dunaj?

24 MS. CUERVO DUNAJ: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Garcia-Pons?

1 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Silva?

3 MR. SILVA: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Maxwell?

5 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Yes.

6 Motion carries. One descending. So we

7 have seven to one. Thank you.

8 * * * * *

9 (Thereupon, the meeting was concluded at 8:50
10 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

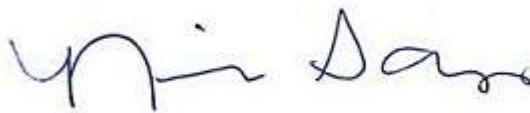
STATE OF FLORIDA:

SS.

COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE:

I, NIEVES SANCHEZ, Court Reporter, and a Notary Public for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

DATED this 24th day of October, 2024.



NIEVES SANCHEZ