



The City of Coral Gables

Historical Resources Department

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES
August 20, 2009, 4:00 p.m.
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida

Table with columns for MEMBERS, attendance (S O N D J F# F M A M J J A), and APPOINTED BY. Lists members like Dorothy Thomson, Margaret Rolando*, Ernesto Santos, etc., and their attendance for each month.

+ Ms. Rolando recused herself from discussion.
- Ms. MacIntyre arrived at 6:53 p.m.; Ms. Meyers departed at 6:54 p.m.

STAFF:
Kara Kautz, Historic Resources Officer
Betty Perez, Administrative Assistant
Rodney Carbonell, Historical Resources Department

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

GUESTS: Ted Faust, Alfredo Pou, Peter Dolara, Albert Williams, Kendell Turner, Dan May, Rick Hickox, Jeff Besa, Richard Amunder, Susan K, Jorge Hernandez, Paulo Mendez, Art Murphy, Elizabeth Murphy, George Volsky, Fernando Alvarez Perez, Ana Alvarez, Frank Martinez, Enrique or Roselyn Carreras, Albert McCraney; City Staff: Patrick Salerno, Maria Alberro Jimenez, Martha Salazar-Blanco, Eric Riel, Ernesto Pinos, Walter Carlson, Peter Iglesias

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

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Joyce Meyers at 4:07 p.m. A quorum was present.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT and DISCLOSURE OF CONTEXT:

Ms. Meyers read for the record the statement regarding lobbyist registration and disclosure. She then stated that if any members of the board had any ex parte communication or contact regarding any cases being heard, it was necessary to disclose such communication or contact. Board members did not indicate that any such communication occurred.

MINUTES: MEETING OF JULY 16, 2009:

Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of July 16, 2009. Ms. Langer seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Ms. Langer, Mr. Torre, Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. Meyers. Nays: None.

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Ms. Langer made a motion to excuse the absence of Ms. MacIntyre. Mr. Heisenbottle seconded the motion, unanimously approved by voice vote.

DEFERRALS: AV 2007-02, 1137 Asturia Avenue; Withdrawn application: COA (SP) 2009-16, 4203 Monserrate

PUBLIC SWEARING IN: Nancy Morgan swore in audience members who planned to testify during the meeting.

AD VALOREM TAX RELIEF:

CASE FILE AV 2006-02:

An application requesting ad valorem tax relief for the property at 3012 Granada Boulevard, a local historic landmark, legally described as Lots 12 and 13, Block 21, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part One, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 108, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The related Certificate of Appropriateness – Case File COA (SP) 2005-04 was granted design approval on April 21, 2005, by the Historic Preservation Board.

Ms. Chin relayed the history of the property as she displayed photographs. She reviewed structural stabilization, the removal of non-sympathetic alterations and additions, concluding that staff recommended approval for the tax abatement. She said the architect and owner were in the audience.

Project Architect Pou described the two-year project to restore the residence. At Ms. Meyers invitation for audience comments, homeowner Peter Dolara briefly addressed the Board. Thereafter, the public hearing portion of the application was closed. Board members spoke positively about the project.

Ms. Langer made a motion to approve the application for ad valorem tax relief. Mr. Torre seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Torre, Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Ms. Langer, Ms. Meyers. Nays: None.

SPECIAL CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS:

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2009-11 Continued:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 126 Oak Avenue, a contributing structure within the “MacFarlane Homestead Subdivision Historic District,” legally described as Lot 18, Block 3-A, MacFarlane Homestead, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 81, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested demolition of the existing structure. This application was heard at the July 16, 2009 meeting of the Historic Preservation Board.

Ms. Kautz reported additional research conducted by staff since the previous meeting, displaying new photographs of the interior and exterior of property. She visited the site with Manny Lopez, City Building Official, whose opinion was that the structure was unsafe. Peter Iglesias, City Structural Engineer, also visited the site with Ms. Kautz, reviewed the interior and deemed the damage severe.

As the Board requested, Ms. Kautz contacted the National Trust regarding the status of the loan request. The Trust coordinator reported that the applications were still under review, and would not disclose if this property was included in the final list. The anticipated notification date was early September.

While awaiting the arrival of Mr. Iglesias, Ms. Meyers invited the owners or their representative to speak.

Albert McCraney, son and nephew of the owners, said the owners still wanted to demolish the building, would maintain the property, and added that another family member wanted to build a similar house on the property at a later date.

Mr. Iglesias presented his assessment of the structure, stating it could not support its own weight. He described a collapsed roof, extensive rot and termite damage and concluded there was no question it was an unsafe structure.

Ms. Thomson supported Mr. Iglesias' opinion. Ms. Meyers said that regardless of the determination about this structure, the Board was concerned about the overall welfare of the entire Mac Farlane Historic District and wanted to find a way to prevent this level of deterioration from happening in the future. She asked Mr. Iglesias to meet with the Board and help with proactive development of options to ensure that the deterioration and destruction does not recur. Mr. Iglesias indicated a willingness to help.

As Ms. Kautz had a list of questionable structures, Mr. Iglesias was asked to visit those buildings and report back to the Board about possible solutions. Additional comments from the public were then invited.

Mr. Hickox, the next door neighbor, reiterated support of the application to demolish the structure, terming the property an eyesore, hazard and impediment to the neighborhood.

There being no further requests to speak, Ms. Meyers closed the public hearing portion of the application.

Mr. Heisenbottle made a motion to grant the COA for demolition due to the significant level of deterioration from photographs and the testimony of the Building Official and Structural Engineer. Ms. Bondurant seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Langer, Mr. Torre, Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Ms. Meyers. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2009-13 Continued:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 1136 Alhambra Circle, a contributing structure within the "Alhambra Circle Historic District," legally described as Lot 3 and the west 35 feet of Lot 4, Block 15, Coral Gables Section "C", as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 26, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested design approval for the construction of an addition and alterations. This application was heard at the July 16, 2009 meeting of the Historic Preservation Board.

Ms. Kautz provided revised design drawings to the Board, stating that the owner, project architect and Mr. Santos worked together to develop design solutions in keeping with Board comments. She displayed historic and current photographs of the house. Comparisons of earlier proposed plans and the re-design were also reviewed.

Project Architect Ana Alvarez detailed changes, after which homeowner Dr. Fernandez Alvarez Perez briefly requested Board support of the revised design. Ms. Kautz advised that the homeowner preferred to keep the original roof design, but added that the new plans were a vast improvement from the original.

Ms. Turner supported the application, reminding the Board about flooding at this site during heavy rains.

Hearing no additional requests for audience input, Ms. Meyers closed the public hearing.

A discussion was held about flooding in the neighborhood during heavy rains. Ms. Kautz said Public Works was aware of the situation, though she would follow up with them.

Appreciation was expressed to Mr. Santos for volunteering his time and expertise to help resolve design issues.

Mr. Heisenbottle made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the revised design as presented. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Ms. Langer, Mr. Torre, Mr. Santos, Ms. Meyers. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2009-14:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 4409 Santa Maria Street, a contributing structure within the "Florida Pioneer Village Historic District" and the "Santa Maria Street Historic District," legally described as the South 50 feet of Lot 18 and all of Lot 19, and the north 25 feet of Lot 20, Block 96, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Five, as recorded in Plat Book 23, at Page 55, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested design approval for the construction of an addition and alterations to the residence. Variances are requested to allow the residence to exceed the allowable floor area ratio.

Mr. Torre advised that the applicants were his friends and neighbors and suggested he might need to recuse himself, though he said he could be objective and impartial about the application. Mr. Heisenbottle and Ms. Meyers also stated personal relationships with the applicants and project architect, but indicated they, too, could be objective.

Ms. Kautz distributed property photographs and a letter of intent from Mr. Hernandez, after which she described the application for the requested variance to permit a slightly larger floor area ratio than permitted by code. She also reported that the Board of Architects reviewed the project without comment. She distributed letters received from neighbors.

Mr. Hernandez reviewed the design in detail, and explained the necessity for a variance for the carriage house.

Mr. Murphy described the history of their ownership and efforts with neighbors to promote designation of the street.

Ms. Meyers invited other audience members to speak. Hearing no requests, she closed the public hearing.

Ms. Kautz read two letters from neighbors in favor of the application (William/Allison Holly and Francisco Carrera Justiz), and one letter from neighbor Cheryl Goldstein, who did not object to the addition, but expressed concern about the window on the garage addition as it was across from her master bedroom and just above her Jacuzzi area.

Asked to address the issue, Mr. Hernandez said the wall with the window under discussion was 16 feet from the Goldstein property line. Mr. Murphy spoke with her about her concerns, and Mr. Hernandez suggested either raising the window to allow light in but disable a direct view, using frosted glass or removing the window altogether.

During discussion, Ms. Kautz explained staff observations and conversations with the architect that satisfied staff areas of concern. However, she advised that staff's recommendation was to lower the carriage house roof height to make it below the existing roof ridge, a suggestion to which Mr. Hernandez agreed. Ms. Kautz also suggested shifting the footprint of the carriage house one and a half feet to the east, to which Mr. Hernandez also agreed.

Regarding the window discussed earlier, Mr. Hernandez said the easiest solution would be to frost the glass or develop a landscaping solution, either of which would be acceptable to the applicant.

Ms. Langer made a motion to approve the application for the Special Certificate of Appropriateness for 4409 Santa Maria with the condition that the building be moved a foot and a half to the east, that the neighbor's window issue be addressed, that the roof ridge match the existing structure, and staff will review revised drawings. Ms. Bondurant seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Torre, Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Ms. Langer, Ms. Meyers. Nays: None.

Ms. Langer made a motion to grant the variance as requested. Ms. Bondurant seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Ms. Langer, Mr. Torre, Ms. Meyers. Nays: None.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2009-19:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the Coral Gables Country Club, located at 997 North Greenway Drive, a contributing structure within the "Country Club of Coral Gables Historic District," legally described as Lots 1 through 9 and Lots 37 through 39, Block 32, Coral Gables Section "B," as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested design approval for alterations to the building. Variances were requested from the Coral Gables "Zoning Code" for setbacks, minimum landscape open space, open air dining, the construction of a trellis, and to allow structures to be closer to the street than the main building.

Mr. Torre recused himself due to a possible future conflict of interest and left the chamber.

Mr. May voiced concern about parking sufficiency and requested deferral until a plan was issued. Ms. Meyers said the Board would listen to the presentation and public testimony, after which a response would be made.

Ms. Kautz reviewed the history of the property and displayed historic and current photographs. She reviewed the application, requested variances, and referred the Board to a Letter of Intent regarding proposed work. Four primary areas of external alterations were described at the Alhambra Circle entrance, the "colonnade plaza", "Liberty Café" and restaurant. Ms. Kautz said nine variances were requested.

Resident George Volsky objected to hearing this agenda item first rather than last as published, as other residents planned to attend and had not yet arrived. Ms. Kautz explained that a large number of City employees were present for the item and the intent was to avoid City overtime expenditure. After debate, Ms. Jimenez advised that the City had no objection to following the agenda as published.

Mr. Heisenbottle made a motion to defer the item to its place on the original agenda. Mr. Santos seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Thomson, Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Ms. Langer, Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Meyers. Nays: None.

Consideration of this item was temporarily suspended, and re-opened at 5:40 p.m., proceeding as follows:

Ms. Kautz reviewed requested variances, after which she introduced Architect Ted Faust, CCI Club Design.

Mr. Faust said his firm was involved in the 2002/2003 renovations, and that he represented Liberty Entertainment Group. The property lease with the City was approved by the Commission on June 4, 2009. Mr. Faust met with the Planning Department, received their comments, and was scheduled to meet with the Planning and Zoning Board on August 26. The application, he stated, was tentatively scheduled for second reading at the September 8 City Commission meeting. Mr. Faust also met with the Board of Architects and received their approved-as-noted comments.

To support his request for design approval, Mr. Faust detailed proposed plans. Regarding the Alhambra Circle entrance, the proposal showed options for approaching the porte cochere, including a fountain plaza. Regarding the west side of the building, he said the design would add antique brick pavers and a four-foot masonry screen wall that would serve as separation from the service court and truck drive, with a columned trellis area would serve as a backdrop for weddings/banquets/events. Regarding the southwest corner room, known as the "Lady Susannah Tweed Room" and used for small functions and meetings, the application proposed to convert the use to the Liberty Café, with inside and outside seating on a new plant-screened, garden-type patio, with added landscaping to shield the sun. Regarding outdoor dining

for the restaurant, it was proposed to be enclosed by plant material as a street buffer. Regarding the current upper-level bar area, considered a premium location for seating and dining inside the building, the proposal called for removing the existing bar and installing a bar at the lower level to permit indoor or outdoor dining. Outdoor dining was proposed for an area adjacent to the pool deck, to be separated by visual screens of potted plants.

Mr. Faust reviewed proposed interior changes and variances. Regarding comments made by the Board of Architects, Mr. Faust presented them as 1) consider using one pair of doors at the Alhambra entrance; 2) the north elevation does not show the north end of the trellis rendered on the elevation, or the chiller screen wall (corrected according to Mr. Faust); 3) all proposed color samples and materials for painting need to be reviewed by the Board of Architects; 4) step up the wall at the corner in the area of the dumpsters.

Board questions and comments/responses:

- Regarding two arched doors in the porte cochere, how would patrons be guided to the appropriate entrance?
Response: Staff and/or signage would guide them.
- Is there a landscaping plan for the parking lot? Response: Mr. Faust displayed and described parking lot landscaping plans. Ms. Kautz requested reconsideration of enhancing “dead spaces” on either side of the parking area with additional landscaping.
- The porte cochere appears inadequate for large events; consider expanding the area with a combination of landscaping and hardscaping to accommodate large groups that need to wait for valet-parked vehicles. The fountains encroach, the area is too tight and needs to be better blended with the rest of the parking lot, including additional landscaping and additional pedestrian areas. Response: An additional pedestrian way could be addressed. Parking on the Granada Boulevard side will remain.
- Proposed changes to the Lady Tweed room seem dramatic and objectionable as presented.

Ms. Meyers invited members of the audience to comment.

Susan K: Earthwork began on the west side. Assistant Public Works Director Ernesto Pinos responded that this was an environmental cleanup project scheduled to be completed in approximately two months.

Susan K: The number of pavers proposed with nearly no added landscaping is a major concern. Safety issues exist with landscaping at the corner of Granada and North Greenway, and impede visibility in that area of the golf course. Consideration of an alternate to pavers was requested, including areas of the pool deck. In the entrance area, a seating wall with incorporated landscaping should be considered. Consideration was requested for an alternate use of the interior entry area, proposed as bridal suites, which Ms. K suggested would be an infrequent use. Ms. K requested a reduction of hard surfaces and an emphasis on landscaping and safety.

Mr. May stated that the parking lot was not large enough to accommodate major event needs. Assistant City Manager Jimenez responded that Mr. May’s concerns were addressed in the existing site plan approval for the property. According to the Zoning Official, Ms. Jimenez said parking was appropriate for the facility’s uses, though she recognized that his issue was parking during major events. She said site plan provisions required offsite parking with no impact to residents, and the City intended to maintain that provision. The operator, she continued, was in process of developing a parking plan in cooperation with the City as part of the lease. She said the City would ensure that negative impact was not made on area residents, and confirmed that the Planning and Zoning Board would review the plan as the appropriate board to address the issue.

After confirming that the entire site was historic, Ms. Kautz said there was no proposed alteration to parking, advising that the Board would only consider alterations to the building.

Ms. Turner said that Architect Felix Pardo might have architectural plans as he provided pro bono work on the building after the 1983 fire. Regarding requested variances, she said most were needed as the facility should be economically successful and attractive to the community. She agreed that the area named for Lady Tweed should be retained in her honor, said outdoor dining was in keeping with the history of the site, and any new materials should match the rest of the

property in design, form and quality. She recommended that all renovations be reversible in the future, that brick or concrete pavers not be used, that doors and windows be historically matched, and that landscaping reflect that which existed when the site was originally developed.

Ms. MacIntyre arrived at 6:53 p.m. and chaired the meeting. Prior to her departure from the meeting, Vice Chair Meyers voiced her excitement about the proposal, and said the new use would be an asset to the community.

Mr. Volsky, speaking for himself and neighbors, objected to plans to alter physical historic aspects of the Granada side of the building, objected to neighborhood noise from outdoor activities, cooking odors that would emanate from the facility, yet he indicated confidence in the company selected to operate the facility.

Mr. May stated objection to the lack of parking discussions as part of this application.

There being no further requests for audience comment, Ms. MacIntyre closed the public hearing portion of the application and opened Board discussion.

Concerns/comments/questions/responses:

- Additional guests require additional parking, making it difficult for the Board to vote on the alterations. Ms. Salazar-Blanco: A zoning analysis was done and additional parking was not indicated. Parking is based on gross floor area, and open dining is not factored into parking requirements. Mr. Faust: Current parking accommodations are grandfathered in, and parking issues will be resolved with valet services and an agreement with the City. Mr. Riel: A parking agreement was part of a 2002 building use approval, still valid, and provides for valet and offsite parking, and that plan is part of this proposal. There will be no change in parking configuration. Offsite parking is across Granada, around the golf course and adjacent to the tennis courts, and there is a specific valet plan. The issue will be addressed by the Planning and Zoning Board at its next meeting. Ms. Jimenez: The lease agreement between the operator and the City was approved June 4, 2009. The operator is currently undergoing the regulatory process.
- Substantial hardscape alterations are proposed without a demonstration of material samples.
- Parking is inadequate for large civic, business groups or major social events, even with valet parking.
- Green space is better than proposed pavers.
- Objection to proposed changes to Lady Tweed space, with a recommendation to consult with Roy Gonas, attorney for Lady Tweed.
- Cafés will be in competition with Burger Bob's.
- Adding a lot of activity is unfair in a residential neighborhood.
- Historic buildings are protected when they are used, the facility has been empty and abandoned for the past year, and efforts should be made to ensure the success of this venture.
- The existing nine-foot high wall will hide anything behind it, and the proposed trellis will enhance the feature of outdoor dining, an enjoyable and unique feature.
- The entrance drop off area, the fountains, the ADA accessibility area need to be redesigned to provide more area for people, and the area needs to be expanded.
- The Liberty Café could be preserved in Lady Tweed's name and re-specified for another use, perhaps as a private dining room.
- An emphasis on landscaping should be made on the Alhambra Circle side to include new, additional and replacement landscaping.
- Choice of materials on the exterior of the building is not appropriate. The architect should address this issue and the fountain detail in addition to other recommendations made by Board members. The reduction of the porte cochere is also a problem.
- The operator was credited with rethinking uses of the building and undertaking the renovations, converting spaces to create more venue sites, and seeking outdoor dining space. Materials proposed for the fountains are not appropriate. The Lady Tweed space should be reflective of her gift. Refinements of the plan need to be more compatible with the historic nature of the building. The porte cochere and patron waiting area needs to be re-worked, and attention must be given to the landscaping.

Ms. Langer made a motion to table the application until the next Board meeting to give the applicant an opportunity to provide the materials and address Board recommendations. Mr. Santos seconded the motion.

Mr. Faust agreed to this proposal, adding that the operator viewed outdoor dining as essential to make the operation successful. He said the materials would be in keeping with the historic facility and he would provide samples at the next meeting.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Bondurant, Ms. Langer, Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None. Mr. Torre was not present for the presentation or the vote, and Ms. Meyers had left the meeting.

Ms. MacIntyre recognized Commissioner Ralph Cabrera.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2009-15:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 1125 North Greenway Drive, a contributing structure within the "Country Club of Coral Gables Historic District", legally described as Lots 18 and 19, Block 15, Coral Gables Section "C", as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 26, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the construction of an addition and alterations to the existing structure.

Ms. Kautz reviewed the history and architecture of the property, which was non-contributing at the time the historic district was designated. In April 2007, an application regarding this property was heard by the Board for additions and alterations. This application is an amendment to those alterations, which were not totally completed. In September 2008, the owner petitioned the Board to declare the property contributing, which the Board approved. As a result, the property falls within the guidelines for ad valorem tax relief.

Ms. Chin reviewed property photographs, before and after alterations. Ms. Kautz added that the design reduced the scope of work; however, because they were requesting ad valorem tax relief, the application was brought for review.

Project Architect Ramon Collado explained the original and current scope of work and reviewed plans. Ms. Kautz added information about interior alterations, and said the Board of Architects approved the plans in May and with the following conditions: 1) eliminate trim around the windows; 2) remove proposed horizontal banding. She expressed concern about the roof entry overhang and how it would support the corner. The architect agreed not to extend the overhang.

Ms. MacIntyre invited other audience members to speak.

Ms. Turner voiced support for the application.

Ms. Langer made a motion to approve the Special Certificate of Appropriateness for 1125 North Greenway Drive, including staff's and the Board of Architects' comments. Mr. Santos seconded the motion.

Homeowner Claudia Puig said she was an excellent steward of the property, had followed every recommendation of the Board and endeavored to restore the property from nearly tear-down condition.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Bondurant, Ms. Langer, Mr. Torre, Mr. Santos, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

Ms. Kautz informed the Board that the election of Board Chair and Vice Chair was scheduled for the September meeting, and that policy issues regarding demolition requests would also be discussed. At the end of the September meeting, Ms. Kautz will provide a brief slide show featuring completed Board projects.

The Boards and Committees Seminar was confirmed for Friday, October 2, 2009, beginning at 9 a.m.

Landscaping at the intersection of Segovia and Coral Way was reported to be underway.

There was discussion about the date of the October meeting, confirmed for October 22 to allow for the annual National Trust meeting.

Ms. MacIntyre reminded Board members that the first session of the historic preservation series would be held Thursday, October 1.

ADJOURNMENT: 8: 30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kara N. Kautz
Historic Preservation Officer