

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 17, 2010, 4:00 p.m.

City Commission Chambers

405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida

MEMBERS:

J A S O N D J F M A M J

Dorothy Thomson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P
Margaret Rolando	P	P	P	P	E	P+	P	E	P	P	P
Ernesto Santos	P	P	P	P	P-	P-	P	P	P	P	P
Venny Torre	E	P	P	P	P	P-	P	P	E	P	P
Dolly MacIntyre	P	P-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Richard Heisenbottle*	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P
Deborah Tackett*									P	P	P
Gay Bondurant*	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E

APPOINTED BY:

Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II
Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Comm. Maria Anderson
Comm. Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
Historic Preservation Board
City Manager
City Commission
City Commission

STAFF:

Kara Kautz, Historic Resources Officer
Simone Chin, Historic Preservation Administrator
Betty Perez, Administrative Assistant
Carlos Mindreau, City Architect
Martha Salazar-Blanco, Zoning Official

A = Absent

P = Present

E = Excused

*** = New Member**

^ = Resigned Member

GUESTS: Janet Gavarrete, Ivan Rodriguez, Arva Moore Parks, William Hartnett, Luis de la Vega, Douglas Wood, Carol C. Horvitz Nutt, John Cozza, Christopher Cooke-Yarborough, Betty Fleming, Alina Vergara, Irma Abella, Zeke Guilford, Silvia Jorin, Andy Parrish, Kathryn Gaubatz, Ruben Ceballos, Mario Benitez,

RECORDING SECRETARY/PREPARATION OF MINUTES: Nancy C. Morgan, Coral Gables Services, Inc.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dolly MacIntyre at 4:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT and DISCLOSURE OF CONTEXT:

Ms. MacIntyre 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.

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Santos made a motion to excuse Ms. Bondurant's meeting absence. Mr. Heisenbottle seconded the motion, unanimously approved by voice vote.

MINUTES: MEETING OF MAY 20, 2010:

Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2010 meeting as written. Mr. Santos seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

DEFERRALS: None.

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

LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION:

CASE FILES LHD 2010-03 and COA (SP) 2010-09:

Consideration of the local historic designation of the building currently on the University of Miami Main Campus (5202 University Drive) referred to as “the Art Building” located at **1300 Campo Sano Avenue**, legally described as a portion of Tract 2 of Amended Plat Portion of Main Campus University of Miami, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in Plat Book 46, Page 81. The applicant is also requesting the issuance of an Accelerated Special Certificate of Appropriateness and design approval for the restoration of the buildings. Variances have been requested for the use of wood as an exterior wall material, wall siding and railings and the use of asphalt shingles as a pitched roof material.

Mr. Heisenbottle recused himself from this agenda item.

Procedurally, Ms. Kautz advised that the local historic designation portion would first be presented and considered by the Board, followed by the COA application. She reviewed a summary of the lengthy history, architectural significance of the building and criteria for designation as photographs and drawings were displayed, concluding that staff recommended approval of the local historic designation.

Attorney Zeke Guilford, representing the University of Miami, requested Board support for the designation, after which he introduced Ms. Parks (member of the Board of Trustees) and University staff members.

Mr. William Hartnett expressed concern about the wood frame building being permitted to remain in a hurricane-prone area, termed the building a hazard from a safety and health viewpoint, and said it contained termites. He recommended removal of the building and urged the Board to deny the application for designation.

Hearing no further requests to speak, Ms. MacIntyre closed the public hearing and invited Board discussion.

Ms. Thomson considered issues raised by Mr. Hartnett. Mr. Santos said he reviewed the plans and also understood Mr. Hartnett’s concerns about the building’s construction. He cited the extensive experience of the engineers and architects involved in the project, noted that Code permitted variances for wood buildings, and added that the project would ensure a safe and secure building, eliminating the dangers of the building in its current state.

Ms. Tackett made a motion to approve the local historic designation of 1300 Campo Sano. Mr. Santos seconded the motion.

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

Regarding the application for the Accelerated Certificate of Appropriateness, Ms. Kautz first generally reviewed the application, followed by a review of the requested variances. After stating that the Board of Architects approved the plans with a recommendation that the plans give more attention to enhancing the entry plaza, Ms. Kautz said staff recommended approval of the variances as requested.

Mr. Guilford introduced Ivan Rodriguez, who conducted a Power Point presentation depicting the history, architecture and alterations made over the years, describing details of the proposed plans and stressing that the plans retained the exact appearance of the original building and would retain its architectural integrity.

In response to Mr. Santos' question about the need for a variance for the railing, Ms. Kautz advised of the Zoning Department's proactive attention to avoiding impediments regarding the railing related to permitting.

Regarding public concerns, Mr. Santos asked Mr. Rodriguez to detail the structural approach in the salvaging of the building. Mr. Rodriguez reviewed the credentials and experience of the structural expert in reinforcing wood frame buildings. He noted his professional experience with structural engineer Douglas Wood, and invited Mr. Wood to address the Board on structural concerns. Mr. Wood also advised that the Florida Building Code did not prohibit the use of wood, and cited several South Florida wood building projects his firm had managed. He said it was possible that steel would be used to reinforce the structure.

In response to Mr. Torre's question regarding windows, Mr. Rodriguez responded that the windows would be wood frame, impact-resistant windows. Related to discussion, Ms. Kautz said a preliminary zoning analysis was conducted and the issues identified as needing a variance were related to the need for substantial re-construction. Also in response to a request for information from Mr. Torre, Ms. Kautz described how this application about this building differed from the University's prior inclination to request partial demolition.

Mr. Hartnett indicated that a concurrency report should be issued.

Regarding the recommendation for enhancing the entry, Ms. Tackett requested additional information. Using displayed drawings, Ms. Kautz described the purpose and said no alterations would be made to the architecture.

Ms. Gaubatz expressed interest in the arboretum and its mature trees, and suggested the possibility of moving the historic building to another site if that would be feasible. During discussion, Ms. Kautz advised of the feasibility of moving buildings, but in this case, it would not be recommended as the building was situated on its original site.

Ms. Parks expressed enthusiasm for the restoration of the building, for Mr. Wood's professional involvement and abilities as a structural engineer, and supported the requested variances.

Ms. MacIntyre closed the public hearing.

Mr. Guilford responded to Mr. Hartnett regarding concurrency, stating that concurrency was not an issue in this case.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to approve the design for restoration of the University building currently referred to as the "Art Building" at 1300 Campo Sano Avenue and the issuance of an Accelerated Special Certificate of Appropriateness. Ms. Tackett seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Rolando made a motion to grant a variance to all wood frame construction. Ms. Tackett seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Rolando made a motion to grant a variance to allow the structure to utilize wood siding as an exterior wall facing. Ms. Tackett seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Rolando made a motion to grant a variance to allow the structure to utilize wood railings on exterior balconies. Ms. Tackett seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Rolando made a motion to grant a variance to allow the structure to utilize asphalt shingles as a pitched roof material. Ms. Tackett seconded the motion.

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

SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2010-05:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **113 Grand Avenue**, an empty parcel of land within the “MacFarlane Homestead Subdivision Historic District,” legally described as Lot 4, Block 1-A, MacFarlane Homestead Subdivision, as recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 81, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the construction of a new office building.

As depictions of the historic district were reviewed, Ms. Kautz described it along with its current and missing structures and their architecture, also reviewing the history of the subject property, now vacant. The application for infill construction of a one-story, new office building was reviewed, with Ms. Kautz adding that after the proposal was advertised and noticed, variance needs were identified by the Zoning Department. However, because of notice requirements, the variances could not be addressed this meeting.

Mr. Parrish and General Contractor Mario Benitez described their involvement with the area and the subject building. Mr. Benitez detailed building plans, noting that landscaping presented a problem and was the reason for variance needs. For clarity, Ms. Kautz explained applicable Code provisions regarding landscaping pertaining to shade trees and shrubs. To comply with the provisions, it is necessary to address the quantity of shade trees and shrubs. Mr. Benitez pointed out the impossibility of complying with some provisions due to the site size.

Ms. Kautz explained the Board of Architects’ conditions to approval, primarily related to the wall proposed for the front of the property and the design of the pedestrian entry gate. She added that staff recommended that the mock divided lights should be dimensional/not flat; that the standing seam metal roof needs to remain unpainted; that the same Bahamian styled shutter be installed in a closed position to create uniformity; that coordination issues within the submitted drawings need to be corrected prior to final approval of the permit drawings. The overall staff recommendation was to grant approval with conditions as stated.

Mr. Torre expressed concern about the walls and requested clarity on the issue. He and Mr. Benitez discussed the proposed pre-cast wall, and Mr. Torre suggested a complementary railing on the sides to replace the precast wall. Mr. Parrish pointed out that nearly all elements of the drawings were added at the request of the Board of Architects because so many Code issues affected the small site, which were explained and discussed. Mr. Heisenbottle shared concern about a precast wall, and discussed alternatives, after which Mr. Torre proposed keystone for the small wall. To Mr. Torre’s request not to use foam mouldings on the structure, Mr. Benitez agreed.

Ms. Thomson recommended that plans be shared with the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association.

Ms. MacIntyre invited audience comments. Hearing no requests, she closed the public hearing.

Mr. Torre commented that the design was fine, that the height of the front wall and the type of construction for all walls needed to be re-studied and re-presented, and recommended re-visiting the gate design.

Mr. Torre made a motion to approve the COA for the design of the building at 113 Grand Avenue with conditions that the two side walls be reviewed and re-presented for height, construction methods and design, and that the gate be restudied for architectural design.

Ms. Rolando offered an amendment, to which Mr. Torre agreed, and re-issued the motion as follows:

Ms. Rolando made a motion to approve the COA for the design of the building at 113 Grand Avenue except for the perimeter walls, incorporating staff comments, including the gate. The applicant will return for Board reconsideration of the walls and variances affected by shrubbery and trees. Mr. Heisenbottle seconded the motion.

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

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2010-08:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the properties at **501 Alhambra Circle**, a local historic landmark and **511 Alhambra Circle**, a non-contributing property within the "Alhambra Circle Historic District," legally described as Lots 13 and 14; and Lots 15 and 16, respectfully, Block 12, Coral Gables Section "B," as recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 111, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the demolition of the house at 511 Alhambra Circle and the construction of an addition to 501 Alhambra Circle.

The history, architectural background and alterations related to 501 Alhambra Circle were reviewed by Ms. Kautz as photographs were displayed. Regarding 511 Alhambra Circle, a non-contributing structure in the historic district, she said the proposal sought complete demolition of the single-family residence, pool and deck as well as other features. At 501 Alhambra Circle, the proposal called for removal of the existing pool and deck as well as the masonry wall separating the two properties. The proposal requests a new, two-story guest "annex" connected to the existing house's one-story garage. The features of the annex and its relationship to the existing residence were detailed by Ms. Kautz as she reviewed plans.

Ms. Kautz added that no variances were requested as part of the application, and preliminary approval was granted by the Board of Architects in April 2010 with the condition that the pool not be part of the house permit.

Staff concluded that the overall design of the new structure was compatible with the historic landmark at 501 Alhambra Circle and to the historic district, with the following recommendations: 1) Paint color, decorative columns and mouldings of the annex should not be exactly the same as the existing house, but similar/compatible; 2) the new gates at the annex driveway need to be drawn and detailed; 3) the garage at the existing house is a flat roof with parapet, and the annex garage should have a parapet only instead of the combination hip/flat roof as designed; 4) the secondary garage door at the rear of the annex garage is out of place and utility could be achieved by a pair of pedestrian doors; 5) The pool, terrace, landscaping and water feature require separate Certificate of Appropriateness applications. A motion to approve the demolition of 511 Alhambra Circle and the design for the construction of an addition to 501 Alhambra Circle with recommendations as stated.

Ms. Kautz noted that the owners are joining two lots rather than separating them, and advised that FAR is not exceeded. Although they are not adding directly onto an existing historic structure, the Zoning Code addresses the design as an addition to the house. The end result will read as two structures.

In response to Mr. Santos' inquiry, Architect Cooke-Yarborough advised that the two properties would have unity of title. Brief discussion regarding the flat roof and Code provisions regarding them ensued.

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

Ms. Kautz commented that as part of the review, all comments made regarding the Zoning Code were addressed in terms of the addition. It may be necessary for the Board to review at a later date the provision in the Code regarding the placement of the swimming pool.

Mr. Heisenbottle made a motion to approve COA (SP) 2010-08 subject to conditions noted in the staff report with the exception of the roof comments: 1) The paint color, decorative columns and mouldings of “annex” should not be the same as the existing house, but similar and compatible. 2) The new gates at the “annex” driveway are not drawn or detailed. 3) The secondary garage door at the rear of the “annex” garage is out of place. The same utility can be achieved through a pair of pedestrian doors. 4) The pool, terrace, landscaping and water feature will require separate COA applications. Mr. Santos seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Santos, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Heisenbottle, Ms. Tackett, Mr. Torre, Ms. MacIntyre. Nays: None; Recused: Ms. Rolando.

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2010-10:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **438 Alcazar Avenue**, a local historic landmark and contributing property within the “Alcazar Avenue Historic District,” legally described as Lot 3 and East 40 feet of Lot 2, Block 5, Coral Gables Section “B,” as recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 111, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the construction of an addition.

The application was reviewed by Ms. Chin who conducted a PowerPoint presentation as she described the history, architecture and alterations. The plans for the addition were described as a small extension to the bathroom. The Board of Architects approved the design in March 2010, and no variances were requested as part of the application.

Ms. Chin stated staff recommendations as follows:

- The openings in the living room should not be widened/the existing widths of the openings should be maintained;
- French doors should have dimensional muntins, vertical in proportion; sidelights should be eliminated as they are too contemporary;
- A memory of the living room door that will be closed should be created by a score line or recess within the garage (the enclosed carport side);
- A proposed coral rock application is a foreign material to the architecture of the residence and should be eliminated from the design;
- The proximity of the terrace’s northern edge to the opening of the new French doors in the living room is awkward and should be re-evaluated;
- Problems exist with the implementation of several components of the design of the bathroom addition, i.e., the addition and the terrace design distracts from the historic nature of the residence (though they do not jeopardize it). Elimination of the sidelights and the coral rock, incorporating the muntins as recommended and maintaining the original opening widths will mitigate the impact.

Ms. Chin concluded by stating that staff recommended approval of the application with conditions as stated above.

Homeowner Luis De La Vega explained their desire for an open living space, combining interior and exterior, and adding more light and air in the house. He enumerated reasons for design decisions and requested additional consideration as he and his wife do not use air conditioning in their home (due to his wife’s allergies) and wanted to achieve additional circulation in the room.

During discussion, Mr. Heisenbottle commented that the design did not comply with Secretary of Interior standards, and thereafter reviewed elements of the proposed design, suggesting changes. Ms. Kautz, Mr. Torre, Ms. Rolando and Mr. Santos joined in the discussion, expressing concerns about the proposed use of coral rock instead of a stucco finish, the eight-foot openings with sidelights in the living room, and using a score line or recess to create a memory of the original openings.

Mr. De La Vega agreed to the following:

- To leave the living room openings the same size as the original openings and to eliminate the sidelights;
- To retain six-foot openings throughout the design;
- To use stucco finish (versus coral rock) on the wall visible to neighbors, and to only use coral rock in the private courtyard off the bathroom, only visible from the shower.

Mr. Heisenbottle made a motion to approve the COA subject to changing doors 01, 02 and 03 to a pair of 3'0" French doors and subject to removal of all coral rock visible from the outside of the residence and revising the surfaces to stucco, and subject to removal of the thin wall used at the rear of the outdoor courtyard now being used to terminate the coral rock, no longer necessary, and to include muntins as recommended by staff, and to incorporate staff's recommendation about the suggestion of the original openings in the living room through scoring or recess where the door to the garage is being removed and filled in. Mr. Torre seconded the motion.

Mr. Santos said the score line detail suggested by staff pertaining to the recess where the garage door will be removed could be resolved by moving the wall back four inches to create an offset and complete break in the corner.

Mr. Heisenbottle and Mr. Torre agreed to amend the motion to include Mr. Santos' recommendation.

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

BOARD ITEMS / CITY COMMISSION / CITY PROJECTS UPDATE:

1044 Coral Way: Ms. Kautz reported that the de-designation of 1044 Coral Way decision was appealed to the City Commission and is tentatively scheduled to be heard in July. Ms. Kautz will notify Board members when this issue is on the agenda and the Board should designate a spokesperson.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to designate Gay Bondurant as Board spokesperson at the Commission meeting, with Ms. MacIntyre serving as alternate spokesperson if Ms. Bondurant is unable to attend. Mr. Torre seconded the motion.

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

New Board Member: Ms. Kautz reported that the Commission is considering a new Board member.

Coral Gables Museum: Summer camp at the Museum will begin next week.

Historic Preservation Commission Conference: Ms. MacIntyre will participate in the conference in Delray Beach next week. She encouraged other Board members to attend.

August HPB Meeting: There may not be an August Board meeting if no applications are received by June 18th.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara N. Kautz
Historic Preservation Officer