



**City of Coral Gables**  
**CITY COMMISSION MEETING**  
**MAY 26, 2020**

**ITEM TITLE:**

**Case File LHD 2019-008**

Maria V. Cerda, the appellant, has filed an appeal to the Coral Gables City Commission from the decision of the Historic Preservation Board at a special meeting held on Wednesday, March 4, 2020, which denied local historic designation to the property located at 1208 Asturia Avenue, legally described as Lots 13 & 14, Block 6, Coral Gables Section E, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 13 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. (Ayes: 5, Nays: 4)

**SUMMARY OF APPEAL:**

The Historic Preservation Board at a special hearing on Wednesday, March 4, 2020 made a motion to not designate the property at 1208 Asturia Avenue, legally described as Lots 13 & 14, Block 6, Coral Gables Section E, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 13 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, as a Local Historic Landmark.

An aggrieved party, Maria V. Cerda, is appealing that decision. This item was heard on the May 12, 2020 City Commission meeting and resulted in a 2-2 tie vote. Pursuant to Section 2-82 of the City Code, when no majority vote is achieved it is carried over to the next commission meeting.

**BACKGROUND:**

In December 2017 the property at 1208 Asturia Avenue was listed for sale by The Keyes Company with a notation in the property description that stated: "This beautiful home may qualify for historical designation." The property was sold to the current owner in March 2018.

The Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Department received a Historic Significance request on September 26, 2019 from Lourdes Valls, the current owner. Article 3, Section 3-1103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks or historic districts*--states that to qualify for designation as a local historic landmark individual properties must have significant character, interest or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state or nation. On October 4, 2019 the Historical Resources Department staff determined that the property did meet the eligibility criteria for designation as a local historic landmark. A letter was issued to the owner. Pursuant to Section 3-1107(g) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code, consideration of the local landmark designation of the property was scheduled for review by the Historic Preservation Board with notice, as required by the Zoning Code.

At the request of the property owner, the item was deferred from the November 20, 2019 and December 18, 2019 Historic Preservation Board meetings.

On January 15, 2020, the Historic Preservation Board met to consider the local historic designation of the property at 1208 Asturia Avenue. The single-family residence, constructed in 1936, was presented as eligible to be a local historic landmark based on its historical significance (criteria a) and architectural significance (criteria b). For designation, a property must meet one (1) of the criteria outlined in the Zoning Code. 1208 Asturia Avenue was determined to meet the following three (3) criteria:

**Historical, Cultural significance**

4. Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic or social trends of the Community.

**Architectural significance**

1. Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style;
2. Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction.

At the meeting, Mario Garcia-Serra introduced himself as attorney representative of the owner accompanied by expert witness Ramon Pacheco. Mr. Garcia-Serra asked the Historic Preservation Board not to designate the property. Numerous members of the public spoke for and against the designation during the public hearing.

The Historic Preservation Board considered the criteria of architectural significance presented which ultimately resulted in two failed motions to designate the property or not due to lack of required affirmative votes. (*Ayes: 4, Nays: 3*) Pursuant to Section 2-503(B) of the Zoning Code, a lack of the required affirmative votes (5) results in the automatic continuance of the matter to the next meeting, which shall be continued until the required affirmative vote is achieved.

The item was then deferred from the February 19, 2020 Historic Preservation Board meeting by the property owner, as only six Board members were in attendance.

A special meeting of the Historic Preservation Board was called on Wednesday, March 4, 2020 so that all nine members of the Historic Preservation Board could be in attendance. After reviewing the record from the previous proceedings, the Historic Preservation Board voted to not designate the property at 1208 Asturia Avenue as a Local Historic Landmark. (*Ayes: 5, Nays: 4*)

This item was heard on the May 12, 2020 City Commission meeting and resulted in a 2-2 tie vote. Pursuant to Sec. 2-82(a)(4) of the City Code, in the event of a tie vote, the matter shall be carried over to the next meeting of the commission. Given that the matter resulted in a tie vote, the appeal will be reconsidered by the City Commission, however, no additional presentation or argument shall be made by the property owner or appellant. However, either party may be present to address questions presented by members of the City Commission.

| <b>ADVISORY BOARD/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION(S):</b> |                             |   |
|--|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Date</b>  | <b>Board/Committee</b>      | <b>Recommendation</b>   |
| 03/4/2020  | Historic Preservation Board | Denial of local historic designation of the property at 1208 Asturia Avenue.<br>( <i>Ayes: 5, Nays: 4</i> ) |

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATION(S):**

| <b>Date</b> |   |
|-------------|---|
| 11/08/19    | Miami Daily Business Review (for 11/20/2019 meeting)    |
| 11/08/19    | Notice of Public Hearing to residents 1,000 foot radius |
| 11/10/19    | Posting of property                                     |
| 12/06/19    | Miami Daily Business Review (for 12/18/2019 meeting)    |
| 12/06/19    | Notice of Public Hearing to residents 1,000 foot radius |
| 12/06/19    | Posting of property                                     |
| 01/03/20    | Miami Daily Business Review (for 1/15/2020 meeting)     |
| 01/03/20    | Notice of Public Hearing to residents 1,000 foot radius |
| 01/03/20    | Posting of property                                     |
| 02/06/20    | Miami Daily Business Review (for 2/29/2020 meeting)     |
| 02/19/20    | Miami Daily Business Review (for 3/4/2020 meeting)      |
| 02/19/20    | Notice of Public Hearing to residents 1,000 foot radius |
| 02/22/20    | Posting of property                                     |

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

1. Results letter from Historic Preservation Board Meeting March 4, 2020
2. LHD 2019-008 Report for 1208 Asturia Avenue
3. Historic Preservation Board Verbatim Transcript (Jan. 15, 2020 HPB)

4. **PowerPoint Presentation – 1208 Asturia Avenue (Jan. 15, 2020 HPB)**
5. **Historic Preservation Board Verbatim Transcript (March 4, 2020 HPB)**
6. **PowerPoint Presentation – 1208 Asturia Avenue (March 4, 2020 HPB)**
7. **1938 Book of Homes featuring 1208 Asturia Avenue**
8. **Zoning Code Provisions – Article 3, Sec. 3-1102, Sec. 3-1103, Sec. 3-1104**
9. **Application for Appeal from the Historic Preservation Board by Maria V. Cerda**
10. **City of Coral Gables Notice of Public Hearing (Jan. 15, 2020 and March 4, 2020 HPB)**
11. **Letters received in support of designation prior to Jan. 15, 2020 HPB Meeting**
12. **Letters received in support of designation after Jan. 15, 2020 HPB Meeting**
13. **Letter received opposed to designation prior to Jan. 15, 2020 HPB Meeting**
14. **Property Survey of 1208 Asturia Avenue**
15. **Petition Waiver for Appeal Fee - 1208 Asturia**