

11/26/25

Historic Preservation Department
Coral Gables City Hall
405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134

RE: Historic Preservation Department – Letter of Intent/Scope of Work – Sec. 23.2-33. – 814 Santiago Street – Existing Garage Proposed Addition

I am writing to submit this letter of intent for the proposed addition at 814 Santiago Street, historic contributing single-family home within the City of Coral Gables.

The proposed project consists of a 643-square-foot second-story addition above the existing garage, which maintains the existing 5-foot rear setback. The proposed area shall serve as a guest suite for family members and a nanny.

We have considered the site's constraints and character in developing this plan:

Construction Logistics: Building above the existing garage allows the owner to remain in the residence during construction, avoiding major disruption to family life and additional costs.

Septic System Location: The septic tank and drainage field occupy the area that would otherwise be developable at grade, precluding other expansion configurations.

Preservation of Circulation and Layout: A ground-level addition to the existing floor would result in a incoherent layout. A second-floor addition would require a complete renovation of the existing structure, expanding the scope beyond what is desired or viable financially & would likely negatively impact the historic character of the house from the street.

Architectural Character: Placing the addition at the rear minimizes any visual impact on the primary street-facing façade, reducing any impact to the historic character of Santiago Street. Habitable spaces above the garage are a common condition in homes throughout Coral Gables / Miami from this same period.

Our design approach is to ensure that the new addition is compatible with the existing structure in scale, massing, and materials, while remaining clearly subordinate to and respectful of the original historic home.

The following 8 criteria have also been considered in anticipation of the variance request:

- 1) That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures or buildings in the same zoning district.
Response: The special condition of this property is its Historic Designation and original building 5ft rear setbacks currently in place.
- 2) That the special conditions and circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant.
Response: The applicant did not create the existing 5ft setback – it is the original setback of the historic structure.
- 3) That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings or structures in the same zoning district.
Response: The variance does not confer any special privilege.
- 4) That literal interpretation of the provisions of the Zoning Code would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of the Zoning Code and would work unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant.
Response: Using the underlying zoning's rear setback required would create a harmful architectural condition by means of inefficient use of structure and illogical architectural volumetry.
- 5) That the variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure.
Response: This variance allows for the reasonable use of the current footprint of the existing structure.
- 6) That granting the variance will not change the use to one that is different from other land in the same district.
Response: The variance will not change the use.
- 7) That the granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of the Zoning Code, and that such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.
Response: The variance is a benefit to the area and preservation intent.
- 8) That the granting of the variance is appropriate for the continued preservation of an historic landmark or historic landmark district.
Response: The proposed additional allows the existing historic structure and street character it provides on Santiago to remain intact.

Thank you,

Giorgio G. Antoniazzi