



The City of Coral Gables

Historical Resources Department

CORAL GABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 17, 2013, 4:00 p.m.
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida

Table with columns for MEMBERS, days of the month (F, M, A, M, J, J, A, S, O, N, D, J), and APPOINTED BY. Lists attendance for members like Dorothy Thomson, Margaret Rolando, etc.

STAFF:

Dona Spain, Historic Preservation Officer
Kara N. Kautz Assistant Preservation Officer
Cindy Dorrel, Administrative Assistant
Emily Ahouse, Historic Preservationist
Craig Leen, City Attorney
Peter Iglesias, City

A = Absent
P = Present
E = Excused
* = New Member
^ = Resigned Member
- = No Meeting

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

GUESTS: Mark Reardon, Erik Thomsen, Mads Thomsen, Neill Hernandez, Lowell Kuvin, Jeffrey Perlman, Jorge Pinon, Ellen Uguccioni, Antonio Rodriguez, Rene Garcia, George Volsky, Juan Fernandez-Barquin, Waldo and J.C. Toyos

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Tackett at 4:06 p.m. A quorum was present.

MINUTES: MEETING OF DECEMBER 20, 2012:

Ms. MacIntyre made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 20, 2012 as presented. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion, unanimously passed by voice vote.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT and DISCLOSURE OF CONTEXT:

Ms. Tackett read for the record the statement regarding lobbyist registration and disclosure. She stated that if any members of the board had ex parte communication or contact regarding any cases being heard, it was necessary to disclose such communication or contact.

Board members disclosed receipt of a letter regarding 745 Minorca Avenue, which contained an invitation to tour the property. Staff will include a copy of the letter for the record.

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Torre made a motion to excuse the meeting absence of Ms. Turner. Ms. Rolando seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

DEFERRALS: None

PUBLIC SWEARING IN: Ms. Morgan administered the public swearing in for those testifying during the meeting.

LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION:

CASE FILE LHD 2012-09 and COA (SP) 2012-20 Consideration of the local historic designation of and an accelerated Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **6312 Riviera Drive**, legally described as Lots 8 through 11 & Part of Undug W/W LYG ADJ. Thereto, Block 257, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 11, according to the plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 28, Page 23, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the restoration of and alterations to the residence.

After explaining that the house was in process of being significantly altered when it sold, Ms. Spain said the new owner wanted to restore the property. Ms. Kautz comprehensively reviewed the property, its history, previous ownership, architectural record and displayed numerous photographs, stating the proposal was reviewed and approved without comment by the Board of Architects. Staff recommended approval of local historic designation and the issuance of an accelerated Certificate of Appropriateness for restoration and alterations. Ms. Spain added that variances were not requested with the application.

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

Ms. MacIntyre made a motion to approve the local historic designation of 6312 Riviera Drive. Ms. Thomson seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Pruitt, Mr. Torre, Mr. Silva, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Tackett. Nays: None.

Mr. Torre made a motion to approve the accelerated Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 6312 Riviera Drive. Ms. Pruitt seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Silva, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Torre, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Pruitt, Ms. Tackett. Nays: None.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW – 1044 CORAL WAY:

City Attorney Leen explained that the property was an item that came before the City Commission by settlement, and reviewed legal aspects of the case. The City Commission de-designated the property with conditions, one of which was that the application be reviewed by the Board and for its recommendations to the Commission. The Board of Architects recommended approval of the application with conditions and comments. Mr. Leen advised the Board to review the application and make recommendations regarding design.

Ms. Spain reviewed Board of Architects' conditions and comments:

- Coordinate the size and proportions of all window openings;
- Review balcony brackets relative to size, proportion, spacing, scale; and consider also adding columns at the balconies to reduce the scale of the spans;
- Study the entry porch columns to minimize the grout joints; consider stacking the masonry units using a butt jointing (also known as butter joints);
- Show the roof pitches graphically on the elevation pages.

Ms. Spain asked the project architect to comment on the mismatched placement of the dormer window on side and front elevations. She also relayed a Mr. Torre's telephone comment regarding a wall on the site plans for which there was no elevation. Stating that the issue raised by Mr. Torre had not been discussed by the Board of Architects, she advised the Board that they could consider excluding a recommendation for this issue. Regarding the historic marker for the property, she called attention to proposed marker text included in Board packets that would be reviewed after Board consideration of the design.

Attorney Kuvin introduced Mr. Reardon, architect for the project.

Upon request, Mr. Leen advised that the Board should seek overall design compatibility with neighboring houses. Ms. Spain added there was no requirement to use materials from the original home.

Ms. Tackett invited additional audience comment. Hearing no public requests to speak, she closed the public hearing.

General discussion:

- Ms. MacIntyre noted the years of time and effort expended on this property, with an end result barely different from the process's beginning.
- At Ms. Thomson's request for historic marker information, Ms. Spain recommended consideration of placing the marker in the City swale. Mr. Leen advised that if the Commission decided to place the marker on the property rather than the swale, a condition could be included to permit City access to the private property to maintain the marker.
- Mr. Torre initially recommended true clay barrel tile for the roof, and that the windows include muntins.
- Ms. Tackett stated a preference for a new house rather than a literal attempt to recall the original, and to detail the windows for historical accuracy; disapproved of the design of the two-story structure/bungalow behind the house, and recommended leaving its window type simple and more modern to differentiate between the two structures.
- Ms. Rolando recommended true clay barrel roof tile; opposed the windows as proposed, stating that the fenestration was confused, the design approach needed to be more traditional and consistency needed to be maintained in terms of overall exterior appearance. She recommended that plans be modified to indicate true clay barrel roof tiles, and that all exterior windows include muntins.
- Ms. Thomson praised the overall design of the house.
- Mr. Kuvin compared the proposed design with neighboring houses, reminded the Board the property was no longer designated historic and pointed out that the owners' family size required a larger residence.
- Mr. Reardon said the owners objected to true clay barrel roof tile.
- Design discussion and recommendations continued and became more specific.

Ms. Rolando made a motion (summarized by Ms. Tackett with approval of Ms. Rolando) to recommend approval of the plans as submitted, and to adopt the comments of the Board of Architects with the following recommendations for additional revisions: 1) that windows on the front elevation contain muntin grids consistent with historical documentation of the time period; 2) that the sizes and proportions of the windows on the south, east and rear elevations more closely match the size and proportions of the windows on the front elevation and also contain muntin grids; that the roof material be a true clay barrel tile; and to incorporate a textured stucco throughout the exterior of the house. Mr. Torre seconded the motion.

Ms. Thomson made a motion to amend the original motion, to separate roofing material from the original motion. Ms. Rolando agreed to the amended motion provided the use of true clay barrel tile roofing material was voted on separately. Ms. Thomson agreed.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Silva, Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Mr. Torre, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Pruitt, Ms. Tackett. Nays: None.

Ms. Rolando made a motion to recommend that the applicant use true clay barrel tile as the roofing material. Mr. Torre seconded the motion.

Ms. Thomson stated that recommending true clay barrel roof tile versus cement tile would place an unnecessary hardship on the owner inasmuch as the application was not to replicate the original historic home and the property was not historic.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Silva, Ms. Rolando, Ms. MacIntyre, Mr. Torre, Ms. Tackett. Nays: Ms. Thomson, Ms. Pruitt.

Ms. Spain reviewed marker text, design, size and cost for Board consideration. Mr. Kuvin reported that the owner did not object to having the marker on the property, and requested a rendition of the original house on the marker rather than the City seal. Various suggestions for amending text were considered.

Ms. Thomson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Torre, to recommend text for the marker to be located at 1044 Coral Way as stated by Ms. Spain as follows: *On this site prior to 1924, one of the first residences on Coral Way was constructed. The one and a half story vernacular building was similar in design to Coral Gables Merrick House located at 907 Coral Way. The design was based on the Bungalow typology with a long porch that wrapped around the building on the front and sides. The home was built for Worth St. Clair and his wife, Emma Merrick, sister to Reverend Solomon G. Merrick, the father of City Founder George Merrick. It remained in the Merrick family until 1956. The property was designated a Local Historic Landmark on April 15, 2004. In May of 2006 the home collapsed. As a result the City of Coral Gables Historic Preservation Ordinance was strengthened.*

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. MacIntyre, Ms. Pruitt, Mr. Torre, Mr. Silva, Ms. Tackett. Nays: None.

LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION:

CASE FILE LHD 2012-07 Consideration of the local historic designation of the property at **745 Minorca Avenue**, legally described as Lots 26, 27 and the east ½ of Lot 28, Block 25, Coral Gables Section “B,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat book 5, Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Attorney Jorge Pinon stated his representation of owner Mads Thomsen,

Ms. Kautz presented a comprehensive historic designation report as property photographs were displayed, concluding that staff recommended approval of local historic designation. She reported that building materials had been removed during the previous two weeks, including wooden spindles on doors, screens, awnings, and original wood material of the front porch.

Ms. Spain reminded the Board that she had been instructed to prepare the designation report, noting that this was the first time the Board would consider moving forward with designation.

Mr. Pinon conducted a lengthy presentation rebutting each item addressed in staff’s historic designation report, focusing his overall comments on issues that he believed detracted from three aspects of integrity: design, material and workmanship/technique.

A report of Mr. Pinon’s research was distributed to Board members at 5:58 p.m. Board members noted that the report included substantial information, and cited difficulty in properly reviewing it during the meeting. Mr. Pinon asked the Board to read and analyze the report to make an informed decision. Ms. Spain clarified that the report was received by staff approximately a half hour prior to the start of the meeting. Mr. Leen advised that, under procedural laws evidence should have been submitted to the City Clerk five days in advance of the meeting. He said the Board could accept the evidence and consider a continuance. Ms. Rolando observed that the report contained both new material and information

the Board had previously received. She recommended letting the applicant make the decision about how they wanted to proceed. Stating he wanted Board members to have an opportunity to carefully review the entire report, Mr. Pinon requested continuance. Mr. Leen advised that if the Board accepted Mr. Pinon's explanation, they could move to continue the hearing; however, he recommended conditioning a continuance on the applicant's commitment to secure the property. He also advised that, inasmuch as the applicant could present new evidence (the aforementioned research report), the City could also present additional evidence, provided it followed procedures and delivered such evidence to the City Clerk at least five days prior to the meeting during which it would be discussed.

Ms. Spain displayed a current photograph of the house, showing open doors and windows, and also asked the Board to condition continuance on securing the building to protect the house from damage.

Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve hearing the applicant's expert evidence at this meeting without making a decision about the application. The motion was not seconded. Ms. Tackett expressed preference for reviewing written evidence privately, before hearing any presentations, as did Ms. Pruitt.

Ms. MacIntyre made a motion to hear the evidence to be presented by the experts present at the meeting, and to make a decision after reviewing the material. Mr. Torre seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote.

Mr. Silva recommended the Board hear the evidence and then make a decision to avoid a month lapse between hearing evidence and making a decision. Mr. Leen advised that if a decision were made today, the Board should review the research report before voting.

Continuing with the applicant's presentation, Ms. Uguccioni reviewed her credentials and background and responded to lengthy interrogatory by Mr. Pinon to establish a record of Ms. Uguccioni's detailed opposition of testimony made by staff in its written and oral reports. Ms. Uguccioni concluded her testimony by stating that, in her opinion, the City had not fulfilled the burden of proof to support approval of local historic designation for 745 Minorca Avenue.

Ms. Pruitt left the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Two other Board members gave notice that they had to leave by 8:00 p.m. Mr. Leen suggested the applicant consider continuing the application or that the Board move to continue the matter. Mr. Pinon continued to present his arguments about various features of the house and their inappropriateness for a historic designation. Mr. Leen advised that even if the property were designated historic, the building could still be demolished under some circumstances. Ms. Tackett pointed out that the Board's consideration of local historic designation was based on the building as it existed at this time.

Mr. Fernandez-Barquin, a structural engineer, relayed his background and credentials. Mr. Pinon requested continuance of the application, indicating that the interrogatory testimony of Mr. Fernandez-Barquin, in support of his written report, was sufficiently important to warrant the time. Ms. Tackett reminded him that the Board would lose quorum in 45 minutes. It was agreed that a motion for continuance under these circumstances was the best option.

Ms. Thomson made a motion to continue the application to the next meeting.

Mr. Torre asked if it would be possible to finish in a half hour to allow for a vote. Mr. Pinon said it would not be possible as he planned to cross-examine staff that would be at least as long as his examination of Ms. Uguccioni. Mr. Leen recommended continuance under the circumstances, and advised that the City also had a structural engineer as a rebuttal witness. The Board would then have the opportunity to hear testimony from both structural engineers at the same meeting. Mr. Leen also advised the Board that if presentation time limits would apply, those time limits should be announced in advance at the next meeting to both sides of the issue.

Ms. Rolando asked Mr. Pinon what he would consider a reasonable amount of time to make his presentation and rebuttal, with an equal time for the City's presentation and rebuttal. Mr. Torre opined that structural discussion could be lengthy. After additional discussion of the issue, Board consensus was to continue the hearing.

Ms. MacIntyre seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. Rolando, Ms. Thomson, Ms. MacIntyre, Mr. Silva, Ms. Tackett. Nays: Ms. Pruitt, Mr. Torre.

Regarding presentation time parameters for the next meeting, based on the hearing being quasi-judicial, Ms. Tackett stated that time for cross examination should be limited to half the presentation time. She recommended that each side have one hour to present and a half hour to cross examine. Mr. Leen confirmed that the time to present and cross examine at the next meeting would be in addition to the time given at this meeting. Ms. Tackett asked Board members for input if they differed. Mr. Pinon argued for additional presentation and cross examination time at the next meeting.

SPECIAL CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS:

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2012-019 An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **439-449 Anastasia Avenue**, a local historic landmark, legally described as Lots 22, 23 and 24, Block 35, Coral Gables Biltmore Section, according to the Plat thereof, as Recorded in Plat Book 20, Page 28 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested approval for an addition of a laundry room and fountain to the apartment building.

Ms. Spain reviewed the design proposal for the laundry room addition and fountain to the rear of the central courtyard, and reviewed the proposed site plan. The Board of Architects and staff believe it is important to retain as much of the courtyard as possible. She said staff recommended approval.

Mr. Fanjul, Architect representing the owner, reviewed the plans and necessity for the addition.

Mr. Torre made a motion to approve the application as presented for 439-449 Anastasia Avenue. Ms. MacIntyre seconded the motion.

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

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2012-021 An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **1253 Obispo Avenue**, a contributing property within the "Obispo Avenue Historic District," legally described as Lot 30 and the west one half of Lot 29, Block 2, Coral Gables Section "E," according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, Page 13 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant requested approval for an addition and alterations to the residence.

Ms. Spain reviewed current and historic photographs as she described aspects of the application. She said staff recommended approval with the condition that muntins be installed in all the windows.

Mr. Fanjul, project architect for this property as well as the previous application, detailed preliminary plans for the addition and alterations. He said the client did not want muntins along the rear of the property in the French doors.

Mr. Torre confirmed that the house was a contributing structure in the historic district and commented that there was very little left of the original historic house to contribute because of alterations made in the past. The Board, staff and architect discussed elements of the design.

Ms. Tackett invited audience comment. Hearing no requests to speak, she closed the public hearing.

Mr. Torre made a motion to approve the application for an addition and alterations to the residence at 1253 Obispo Avenue with windows as presented in the application. Ms. MacIntyre seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ms. MacIntyre, Mr. Silva, Ms. Rolando, Mr. Torre, Ms. Tackett. Nays: Ms. Thomson

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Proactive Designation of Historic Homes: Mr. Torre initiated discussion of proactively preserving historic homes, and establishing a plan to designate them to protect them from loss. Ms. Spain relayed that staff was working on historic districts, including Coral Way and Granada Boulevard as priorities. Ms. Kautz discussed a County survey of the City that was conducted, and Ms. Spain discussed the key designation types staff focuses on: the period significance of the 1920s and the Mediterranean Revival homes; homes designed by outstanding architects after the 1920s. Ms. Rolando observed multiple sides of the issue: 1) preventing significant homes from being demolished; 2) inappropriate additions to historically-significant homes; 3) significant homes being neglected.

Ms. MacIntyre suggested volunteers to help with file research to identify buildings designed by famous architects or significant time periods. Volunteer architectural students could also help.

745 Minorca Avenue: Ms. Thomson asked of the absent Board members could deliberate on the 745 Minorca Avenue application. Mr. Leen said transcripts will be needed, and absent Board members can review a copy of the meeting DVD.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dona M. Spain
Historic Preservation Officer