



Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts

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COA (SP) 2022-022
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**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR THE PROPERTY AT
LE JEUNE PLAZA
A CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE WITHIN THE
CITY HALL HISTORIC DISTRICT AND
A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

Proposal: The application is requesting design approval for the installation of public art.

Artist: Janine Antoni

Owner: The Miami-Dade Property Appraiser website indicates the site is within the right-of-way

Legal Description: Coral Way and Le Jeune Road, Section "B".

Site Characteristics: The property is located at the intersection of Coral Way, Le Jeune Road, and Biltmore Way.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City Hall Historic District contains the locally and nationally designated Coral Gables City Hall built in 1927-28 by P.J. Davis Construction Company and designed by Phineas Paist, Denman Fink, and Harold Steward, Sr. The district also contains Coral Way, a state and locally designated historic roadway; Le Jeune Plaza, a Local Historic Landmark designed by landscape architect Frank Button and artist Denman Fink; and Merrick Park, a commemorative property named for George Merrick, the City's founder, and Biltmore Way, the original route to the Biltmore Hotel and of the trolley system in the 1920s.

Since 2016 the City of Coral Gables has received recognition support from Art Basel for an annual temporary exhibition from December through February. Often, the temporary artworks have been acquired as permanent acquisitions to the City's public art collection.

In anticipation of this year's proposal moving forward to the City Commission on August 24, 2022, the Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Department, through the Cultural Development Board, respectfully requests a motion by the Historic Preservation Board approving the proposed installation site of this year's artwork.

Artist Janine Antoni is proposing a site-specific sculpture made for City Hall that physically reflects design elements of the existing bronze plaque for the George Merrick statue.

The concept of the artwork contributes to the City's public acknowledgement of its civic purpose. Realized as a finger labyrinth in the shape of the anatomy of the ear and cast as a bronze plaque the same size as the one for the statue, people will be encouraged to touch the artwork by tracing their finger through a channel initially created in collaboration with the artist and residents.

PROPOSAL

The application requests design approval for the installation of public art.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The following Standards have application in this matter:

2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired*



Proposed Location



Proposed Art

STAFF OBSERVATIONS

The artist is proposing installation of the artwork as two pieces that may be set in place as a temporary exhibition, or permanently installed to become part of the City's public art collection. The preferred site for the artwork is in front of City Hall on the designated historic plaza area, close to the pedestrian sidewalk at the intersection of Coral Way, Le Jeune Road, and Biltmore Way.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The application requests design approval for the installation of public art. The proposed public art is compatible with the historic district and the local historic landmark in terms of massing, scale, materials, and design. The artwork does not significantly impact the views to or from City Hall and can easily be removed in the future.

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE** the design proposal for the installation of public art located at Le Jeune Plaza, a contributing resource within the Coral Gables City Hall Historic District and a Local Historic Landmark and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully submitted,

Warren Adams
Historic Preservation Officer