



**City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
May 26, 2015**

ITEM TITLE:

Historic Preservation Board meeting of March 19, 2015.

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

DEFERRALS: Case File COA (SP) 2015-001, 765 North Greenway Drive.

SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2014-018:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 1252 Obispo Avenue, a non-contributing resource within the "Obispo Avenue Historic District," legally described as Lot 3 & West ½ of Lot 4, Block 3, 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. The applicant requested design approval for first and second story additions, and alterations to the existing one-story residence.

A motion was made and seconded to approve issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 1252 Obispo Avenue. (*Ayes: 6, Nays: 0*)

CASE FILE COA (SP) 2015-002:

An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 1150 Anastasia Avenue, The William H. Kerdyk Tennis Center at the Biltmore Hotel, a Local and National Historic Landmark. A lengthy legal description is on file in the Historical Resources Department. The City of Coral Gables requested design approval and the granting of a variance from the Coral Gables Zoning Code for a new monument sign in association with a reduced scope of work from a previous application.

A motion was made and seconded to approve granting a variance from the Coral Gables Zoning Code for a new monument sign. (*Ayes: 6, Nays: 0*)

A motion was made and seconded to approve issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 1150 Anastasia Avenue, The William H. Kerdyk Tennis Center at the Biltmore Hotel, for the reduction in the scope of the work from a previous application. (*Ayes: 6, Nays: 0*)

BOARD ITEMS: BOARD ITEMS / CITY PROJECTS UPDATE:

Venetian Pool: Ms. Rolando commented on the outstanding appearance of the refurbished Venetian Pool. Ms. Spain suggested that Board members view the landscaping throughout the site as the Public Service Director was endeavoring to match appropriate plants with those originally used on the property.

Florida Trust Conference:

Ms. Spain reported that the Florida Trust Conference, to be held this year in Miami, would begin May 7th.

McFarlane Homestead Update:

In response to Ms. Thomson's inquiry about the status of plans for Homestead home renovations, Ms. Spain reported that slightly less than \$600,000 had been allocated from Miami-Dade County, and a continuation of the rehabilitation of homes would be brought before the Board.

The funds will be managed by the City's Historical Resources Department, which will hire the architect and contractor. Miami-Dade County has other funds to be allocated to refurbishing three homes, and City staff will help with those projects as well. Ms. Spain pointed out that the McFarlane Homestead is the only district within the City that is listed in the National Register.

NEW BUSINESS:

Citizen Commentary:

Mr. Fabre, 600 Biltmore Way, addressed the Board about the amount of development within the City, specifically regarding the role of the Historic Preservation Board in the process. He requested consideration about quality over quantity.

Referencing the April 2014 text amendment to the Master Zoning Plan, he cited (as an example of how zoning and text amendments could be manipulated) that sections of Segovia, LeJeune and Ponce de Leon Boulevard zoned for duplex were changed to townhouses. He asked if these changes could be postponed because there was a development proposed on Catalonia Avenue as well. Mr. Fabre said he applied for a review of the street to see if it could be designated historic.

In response, Ms. Spain explained that a letter in response to his request had been drafted the day before. She said three interns had researched and gathered all files and microfilm relevant to his request as he had applied for designation of a historic district from Alhambra Circle to Bird Road, which includes numerous properties. After reviewing all results of the research, she said staff opined that the requested area did not qualify to be designated as a historic district, but she emphasized that the district designation issue was separate from the rezoning issue.

Ms. Rolando commented that the beautification project along Segovia Street improved the overall appearance and made it a more livable street. She observed that most duplexes there appeared to have been built in or around the 1950s. Ms. Spain advised that some individual properties on Segovia were designated historic but, on the whole, the area didn't qualify as a district.

In response to Mr. Fabre's inquiry about consideration of allowing a townhouse ordinance for the street, Ms. Spain replied that the area's inappropriateness as a historic district didn't mean that zoning for the area should be changed. As discussion continued, Ms. Thomson suggested a moratorium on development there and asked the Historical Resources Department to address the issue to Planning and Zoning. Ms. Spain said she would request a verbatim transcript of the discussion at hand and forward it to Planning and Zoning.

Mr. Silva observed that the same discussion had been held about Valencia Avenue. Ms. Spain reported that staff recommended against designation of the Valencia properties, to which the City Commission agreed. Mr. Fabre commented that architecture for the Valencia development lacked in character and was not consistent with Coral Gables' appearance. He called for better communication between the Historical Resources Department, the Planning Department and the Board of Architects to improve the quality of the architecture within the City.

As discussion continued, Mr. Silva asked if Mr. Fabre's request had been forwarded to the Planning and Zoning Board. Mr. Fabre replied that he had a meeting on Monday with "Ramon" to review the status of the text amendments.

Ms. Pruitt praised Mr. Fabre as a concerned citizen and voiced support for his right to be heard. Ms. Spain advised that when the issue was scheduled to be heard by the City Commission, there would be a public hearing. She added that she would forward the information to the Planning and Zoning Board.

Historic Property Plaques:

Ms. Rolando requested the status of plaques for historically-designated properties. Ms. Spain said staff is obtaining bids to have the plaques made, and said this would be the Department's contribution to the City's 90th anniversary.