



COA (SP) 2021-002
April 21, 2021

Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts

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**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR “PENTLAND HOUSE - BUILDING 34”
LOCATED AT 1238 DICKINSON DRIVE
A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK LOCATED ON
THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI MAIN CAMPUS**

Proposal: The applicant is requesting design approval for the replacement of the existing windows, interior renovations, and the addition of an elevator tower.

Architect: Landera Associates

Owner: University of Miami

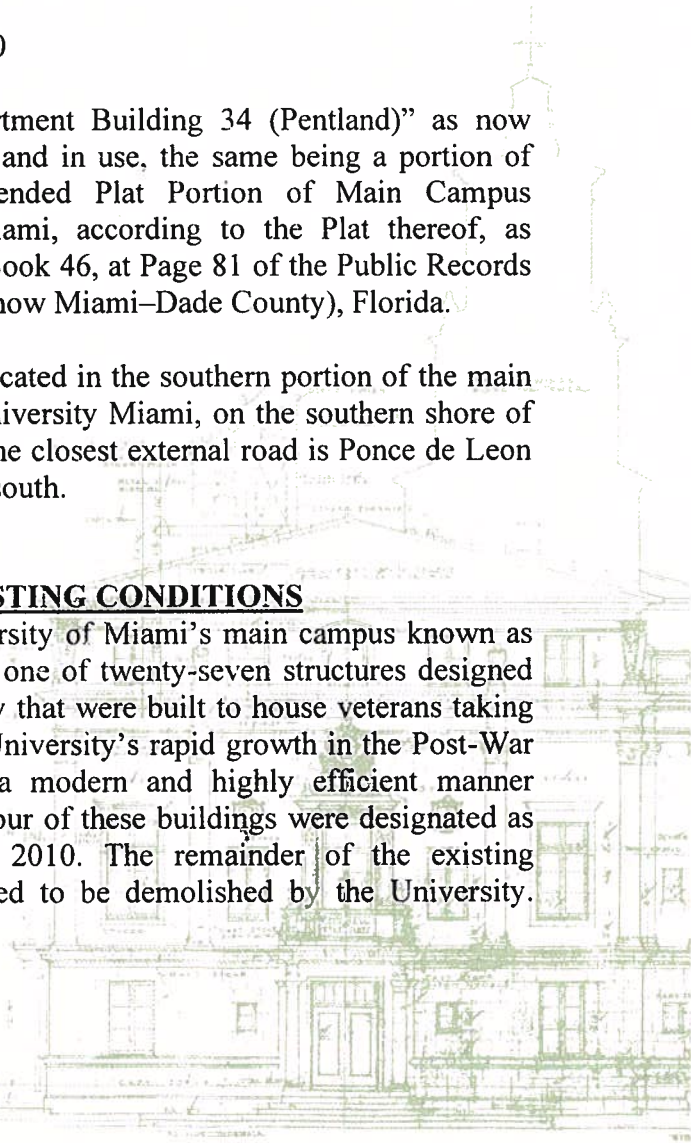
Folio Number: 03-4130-015-0070

Legal Description: All of the “Apartment Building 34 (Pentland)” as now existing, laid out and in use, the same being a portion of Tract 5 of Amended Plat Portion of Main Campus University of Miami, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 46, at Page 81 of the Public Records of Dade County (now Miami-Dade County), Florida.

Site Characteristics: The building is located in the southern portion of the main campus of the University Miami, on the southern shore of Lake Osceola. The closest external road is Ponce de Leon Boulevard to the south.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1947, the structure on the University of Miami’s main campus known as the “Pentland House - Building 34” was one of twenty-seven structures designed by Robert Law Weed and Marion Manley that were built to house veterans taking advantage of the “GI Bill.” Part of the University’s rapid growth in the Post-War years, these structures were styled in a modern and highly efficient manner emblematic of the International Style. Four of these buildings were designated as local historic landmarks in November 2010. The remainder of the existing veterans’ housing structures were allowed to be demolished by the University.



PROPOSAL

The applicant is requesting approval for the replacement of the existing original steel frame windows, interior renovations, and the addition of an elevator tower with connecting walkways at the second and third floor.

On December 17, 2015, the Historic Preservation Board approved a Special Certificate of Appropriateness - Case File COA (SP) 2015-019 - for this same scope of work. There were no conditions of approval at the time the COA was granted. The COA expired in 2017 without the project being implemented. This proposal represents the same scope of work as previously applied for in 2015.

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.*
5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.*
6. *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*
9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
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.*

STAFF OBSERVATIONS

The work proposed includes interior renovation to prepare the building for a new use as the office space for the Theater Arts Program and/or another University Department. Interior partitions will be reconfigured to accommodate the new use. None of the proposed interior work affects the window or door openings on the exterior of the building.

On the exterior of the building, the proposal includes the installation of new windows, the installation of thru-wall air-conditioning units with metal louvers, and the construction of an elevator tower on the north side of the building.

The applicant's proposal requests approval to remove the original steel Hope's window system which is a combination of fixed units flanked by awning-type operable windows, single small

awning windows, and a unit comprised of two stacked awning windows. They are proposing to install custom made impact-resistant fixed and operable steel windows, also made by Hope's in the same openings and in the same configuration as currently exists, with the exception of the lower units in Types "A" and "B," which will be fixed and not operable. Window Type "E" will be a fixed unit as well.

The University is also proposing to install thru-wall air-conditioning units throughout the building. Currently, the building has window units mounted on plywood and installed within the frame of the windows. The new units will be flush with the exterior wall with a metal louver (painted to match the building) mounted on the exterior to conceal the units. All exterior conduit and piping will also be removed.

The final exterior alteration proposed is the construction of an elevator tower adjacent to the existing, original stair tower on the north side of the building. Like the existing stair tower, the new elevator tower will be connected to the building with concrete walkways at the second and third floor. The new open-air walkways will continue the simple metal pipe railings of the existing building.

VARIANCES

No variances have been requested with this application.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

The proposal was reviewed and approved administratively by the City Architect on May 18, 2020 without comments.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The existing steel window units are original to the buildings and their operability played an important role in the "Subtropical Modern" architectural style in which these structures were designed. The "Subtropical Modern" is a local interpretation of the International Style, specifically adapted to the local environment. Elements include the use of exterior stairways and breezeways, cross-ventilation, wooden louvers, and overhanging eyebrows to protect from sun and rain.

The windows have been in place since 1947 and now are over 60 years old. The University has had ongoing concerns and issues about the levels of maintenance, HVAC efficiency, and security that these existing windows provide. They sought an appropriate replacement and are replacing the windows in-kind. Some of the units will be fixed windows to respond to the University's concerns. The introduction of thru-wall air-conditioning units is in response to the removal of the window units that currently exist. The University looked at other options, and this was deemed to be the least intrusive. Similar units were installed at the University's school of architecture.

The proposed elevator tower is necessary to provide ADA access to the upper floors of the building. Sited adjacent to the existing stair tower to minimize the impact on the north façade of the building, the elevator tower takes its cues from the existing building and its detailing. The proposed addition and alterations do not detract from the overall historic integrity of the property.

As a condition of approval, Staff requires that the window glass be clear with no tint or mirror finish.

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE with the condition above** the design proposal for the replacement of the existing windows, interior renovations, and the addition of an elevator tower in the building currently located on the University of Miami Main Campus referred to as "Pentland House - Building 34" located at 1238 Dickinson Drive, legally described as all of the "Apartment Building 34 (Pentland)" as now existing, laid out and in use, the same being a portion of Tract 5 of Amended Plat Portion of Main Campus University of Miami, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 46 at Page 81 of the Public Records of Dade County (now Miami-Dade County), Florida and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully submitted,



Warren Adams

Historic Preservation Officer