

July 14, 2020

To: Design Review Board Members and Planning Department Staff,

Re: Request for Design Review Approval & a Waiver & Variance for New Residence located at 297 North Coconut Lane, Miami Beach, Florida 33139

Dear Board Members and Planning Staff,

Let this letter serve as the letter of intent in support of the owner's request for Design Review Board (DRB) approval and listed waiver and variance requests for the construction of a new two-story residence in a lot with an existing residence constructed in 1988. The applicant is Robert G. Garza, the owner of the property located in an RS-4 district.

As designed, the house's lot coverage is 23.0% (1,954SF) of the 8493.3 sq. ft. site and the unit size is 48.5% (4,116 Sq. Ft.). The height of the new residence is proposed at 24'-0" measured from First Top of Slab, which is FEMA Base Flood (+10.00NGVD) + 5'-0" Freeboard = +15'-0" NGVD.

Waivers – The applicant is seeking the following waivers:

1. Waive Elevation requirements for the Open-Space Court-Yard for Both elevations
 - a. As per Sec. 142-106 (2)d, elevations that are parallel to the property line and over 60' in length or 50% of lot depth must be broken up by an open space. This rule is, again, created to avoid boxy and uninteresting design solutions. In either side elevation, there is a lot of movement, making the residence interesting and dynamic. The entire residence seems like it is floating, with only the stair/ elevator tower and frames with dark wood ipe louvers as supports. In the East elevation you see the entry which is setback quite a distance from the rest of the elevation. This elevation is interrupted by a full height glass stair tower. In the West Elevation the elevation again seems like it is floating. The elevation is broken up by this large elevator tower, finished with natural concrete. On the second floor we also have an outdoor lounge area breaking up the elevation.

Variations - The applicant is seeking the following variations:

1. Request for A/C enclosed entry vestibule exceeding 3% of Lot Area. The design call for a 312 SQ. FT. entry vestibule in the understory level. By code we are allowed 272.4 SQ. FT. Thus we are asking for this variance for 39.6 SQ. FT.

- a. From a structural point of view, this area is vital. Since most of the residence is “floating” we need to have this elevator and stair tower as a large anchor, supporting the residence. The elevator and stair tower will not be very visible from the street view. As you can see in the floor plans, there is a large cascading water feature in front of the stairs, giving a zen and welcoming feeling as you approach the residence. Once again, we are asking for the variance for a mere 39.6 square feet, not a large number when compared with the 9,080 Square Foot lot this residence sits on. Overall this residence will fit in with other residences designed in the Tropical Modern Architecture style and will not feel out of place. Lastly this home will be at FEMA base flood zone +5’ (freeboard). This will definitely meet the requirements of the city for Sea Level Rise. The granting of this variance will allow this, and it will make for a truly beautiful design.
2. Understory Floor to Ceiling Height Variance
- a. As stated in the code, Sec. 142.105(4)d.1, in the understory space, we are allowed a 7’-6” clearance from the lowest level slab to the ceiling. We are requesting a 6” height variance to this, so we can go to 8’-0” floor to ceiling height.

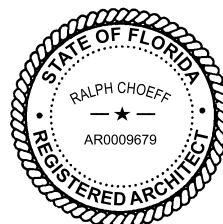
The reasoning behind this 6” addition to height is to help create a welcoming space under the residence. Our aim for this residence is to make it feel like it is “floating,” and this would definitely add to this effect. By right, we are allowed to go to FEMA 10’ + 5’ = 15’. With the CL of road being at 5.00’ NGVD, we are proposing the lowest level slab to be at 5.5’ NGVD, a 6” difference. We are not raising the grade much in this property, so the residence will not feel so massive from the street, which is the purpose of limiting the understory height to 7’-6” and the overall building height to 24’-0” The granting of this variance will make for a truly beautiful design.

I ask for your support and your vote in favor of the design and requested waiver and variance so that we may proceed with the project . We ask that the Board approve our application as submitted. Should you have any questions regarding the application, please do not hesitate to contact our offices at the number listed below.

Sincerely,

Ralph Choeff

Principal, Choeff Levy Fischman



Digitally signed
by Ralph Choeff
Date: 2020.07.14
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