



200 S. Biscayne Boulevard  
Suite 300, Miami, FL 33131  
[www.brzoninglaw.com](http://www.brzoninglaw.com)  
305.377.6236 office  
305.377.6222 fax

## VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL

May 7, 2021

Michael Belush, Planning and Zoning Manager  
Planning Department  
City of Miami Beach  
1700 Convention Center Drive, 2nd Floor  
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

RE: **DRB21-0672** – Letter of Intent – Design Review of Proposed  
New Single-Family Home located at 2581 Lake Avenue,  
Miami Beach, Florida

Dear Michael:

This law firm represents Jay and Tammy Levine (collectively the "Applicants") in their application for design review of a new single-family home replacing an existing pre-1942 single family home located at 2581 Lake Avenue in the City of Miami Beach (the "City") and identified by Miami-Dade County Folio No. 02-3227-010-0070 (the "Property"). This letter serves as the required letter of intent for design review of the proposed home. The Applicant does not request any waiver or variance.

Property Description. The Property is a waterfront parcel approximately 20,705 (0.48 acres) in size located north of the intersection of West 27 Street and Lake Avenue. The Property is irregularly-shaped with diverging property lines that widen from north to south. The Property is improved with a two-story single-family home originally constructed in 1941 designed by Alexander Lewis. The home has undergone several additions, beginning in 1951, when a second story addition was constructed. In 1954, an additional bedroom and bathroom was added to the existing home. See Exhibit A, Building Card. With respect to land use and zoning, the Property is designated Single Family Residential ("RS") by the Future Land Use Map of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and is zoned single family residential ("RS-2").

Proposed Home. The Applicants propose to replace the existing single-family home with a beautifully designed two-story

home that meets their family's needs (the "Proposed Home"). Notably, the Applicants' proposed design does not require any waivers or variances. The Proposed Home responds to the irregular shape of the lot by providing a unique three-tiered design with a series of courtyards that creatively break up the massing of the structure. The first tier at the narrow front of the Property contains a two-car garage connected to the central tier where the entrance to the Proposed Home is located. Through a central hallway flanked with courtyards on the north and south sides, the central tier connects to the two-story rear tier located on the widest portion of the Property adjacent to the waterfront.

The two-story rear tier is setback 120'-8" from the front property line, which preserves privacy for the Applicants and reduces the scale of the Proposed Home as viewed from Lake Avenue. The rear tier contains the majority of the common family areas and bedrooms for the Proposed Home, including an outdoor covered living room with waterfront views located towards the north side of the Property. On the roof of the rear tier, the Proposed Home features a modest roof terrace overlooking Sunset Lake. Notably, two rooftop solar arrays will be installed on the north and south sides of the roof terrace, which will serve to reduce any heat island effect, as well as reduce energy consumption of the Proposed Home consistent with the City's long-term resilience goals. In the rear yard, the Proposed Home features a pool terrace, swimming pool, dock, and accessory trellis structure located at the northeast corner of the Property. Overall, the Proposed Home masterfully maximizes the space within the triangular-shaped lot while remaining fully compliant with City's Land Development Regulations ("LDRs").

Analysis. The Proposed Home complies with the requirements of the RS2 Zoning District with respect to lot coverage, unit size, height, setbacks, and elevation. Specifically, the Proposed Home provides:

- Lot coverage of 29.9% where 30% lot coverage is permitted;
- Unit size of 8,556.8 square feet (41.3%) where 10,225.5 square feet (50%) is permitted;
- Front Yard open space of 53.3% where 50% is required; and
- Rear Yard open space of 71% where 70% is required.

With respect to elevation, it should be noted that the finished floor elevation of the existing home is 7.40' NGVD, below today's minimum requirement of Base Flood

Elevation of 8.00' NGVD + 1', which is 9' NGVD. On the other hand, the elevation of the Proposed Home takes advantage of 2' of permitted freeboard, resulting in a Finished Floor Elevation of 10' NGVD. This increase in Finished Floor Elevation is critical for protecting the Proposed Home from storm and tidal induced flooding, and is consistent with the City's desire to elevate habitable spaces in the face of future sea level rise.

The Proposed Home complies with all required setbacks, as follows:

<b>Setback</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Front – 1-story	20'	24'-3"
Front – 2-story	30'	120'-2"
Side Interior 1	10'	15'
Side Interior 2	15'	10'
Rear	32'	32'
Pool	7'-6"	7'-6"
Accessory Structure Rear	16'	16'
Accessory Structure Side	7'-6"	7'-6"

Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Criteria. The proposed project advances the sea level rise and resiliency criteria in Section 133-50(a) as follows:

**(1) A recycling or salvage plan for partial or total demolition shall be provided.**

The Applicants will provide a recycling or salvage plan during permitting.

**(2) Windows that are proposed to be replaced shall be hurricane proof impact windows.**

The Proposed Home will feature hurricane impact windows.

**(3) Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows, shall be provided.**

The design of the Proposed Home features multiple courtyards, and outdoor covered living area, and proposes to include operable windows where appropriate. Further, the abundant landscaping and permeable materials contribute to passive cooling, which represents a significant improvement from the existing condition. In addition, the Proposed Home features two (2) solar arrays, that will augment the energy supply for the Proposed Home and reduce consumption for cooling purposes.

**(4) Resilient landscaping (salt tolerant, highly water-absorbent, native or Florida friendly plants) shall be provided, in accordance with Chapter 126 of the City Code.**

The Applicants have worked with a landscape architect to provide landscaping that is appropriate for the Property, with plant species that are native, salt-tolerant, and Florida-friendly. The proposed plantings are appropriate for the area and specifically selected to increase flood resilience and improve stormwater drainage on the Property.

**(5) The project applicant shall consider the adopted sea level rise projections in the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Action Plan, as may be revised from time-to-time by the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact. The applicant shall also specifically study the land elevation of the subject property and the elevation of surrounding properties.**

The Proposed Home features no residentially habitable space below base flood elevation and increases the Finished Floor Elevation from 7.4' NGVD applicable to the existing home, to 10' NGVD.

**(6) The ground floor, driveways, and garage ramping for new construction shall be adaptable to the raising of public rights-of-ways and adjacent land and shall provide sufficient height and space to ensure that the entry ways and exits can be modified to accommodate a higher street height up to three (3) additional feet in height.**

The driveways and garage are designed with future roadway elevation projects in mind. In addition, the increased Finished Floor Elevation of the Proposed Home from the existing condition makes the Property more adaptable to future road raising projects.

**(7) As applicable to all new construction, all critical mechanical and electrical systems shall be located above base flood elevation. All redevelopment projects shall, whenever practicable and economically reasonable, include the**

**relocation of all critical mechanical and electrical systems to a location above base flood elevation.**

Proper precautions will be taken to ensure the critical mechanical and electrical systems are located above base flood elevation.

**(8) Existing buildings shall, wherever reasonably feasible and economically appropriate, be elevated up to base flood elevation, plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard.**

It is not reasonably feasible to elevate the existing home.

**(9) When habitable space is located below the base flood elevation plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard, wet or dry flood proofing systems will be provided in accordance with Chapter of 54 of the City Code.**

The design of the Proposed Home does not feature any habitable space below base flood elevation plus Freeboard. The existing home is located below base flood elevation and does not currently contain any wet or dry flood proofing systems, making it vulnerable to damage from storm and tide induced flooding events.

**(10) As applicable to all new construction, water retention systems shall be provided.**

The Proposed Home will retain all stormwater on-site. Notably, the Proposed Home features permeable pavement in the front yard, which serves to allow natural percolation and reduce stormwater runoff.

**(11) Cool pavement material or porous pavement materials shall be utilized.**

The Applicants propose a substantial increase in cool and/or porous pavement materials, including a 100% permeable driveway in the front yard.

**(12) The design of each project shall minimize the potential for heat island effects on-site.**

The Applicants propose a roof terrace with abundant landscaping and solar panels. In addition, the Proposed Home features a green roof on the one-story section of the rear

tier located towards the southeast corner of the Property. All of these features serve to minimize heat island effect.

Conclusion. The Applicants' proposed design responds beautifully to unique challenges of an irregular site without need for waivers or variances. The Proposed Home features multiple resilient design elements that contribute to the City's resilient future, such as roof top solar panels, permeable driveway materials, a green roof, and elevated habitable spaces. Ultimately, the Proposed Home complements the existing mosaic of architectural styles within the Sunset Island neighborhood, is consistent with the Code in all respects, and improves resilience of the Property. We therefore respectfully request your favorable review and recommendation. If you have any questions or comments, please call me at 305-377-6236.

Sincerely,



Matthew Amster

Attachment

cc: Jay Levine  
Tammy Levine  
Wesley Kean  
Nicholas Rodriguez, Esq.