

MIAMI BEACH

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Staff Report & Recommendation

Design Review Board

TO: DRB Chairperson and Members

DATE: September 10, 2021

FROM: Thomas R. Mooney, AICP
Planning Director

SUBJECT: DRB21-0638
2044 Alton Road

An application has been filed requesting Design Review Approval for the construction of a new two-story residence that includes one or more waivers and a variance from the setback required for rooftop covered structures to replace an existing architecturally significant pre-1942 residence.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the application, including the variance.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Lot 9 of Block 16, of "Amended Plat of Sunset Lake Subdivision", according to Plat thereof as recorded in Plat Book 8, Page 52, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

SITE DATA:

Zoning:	RS-4	Grade:	Not provided in survey
Future Land Use:	RS	Flood:	+8.00' NGVD
Lot Size:	7,305 SF	Freeboard:	+1.0'
Lot Coverage:		Finish Floor Elevation:	+9.0' NGVD
Proposed:	1,919 SF / 26.2%*		
Maximum:	2,191.5 SF / 30%		
Unit Size:			
Proposed:	2,684 SF / 36.7%*		
Maximum:	3,652 SF / 50%		
	*As represented by the applicant		
Height:			
Proposed:	24'-0" / Flat roof		
Maximum:	24'-0" / Flat roof		

Surrounding Properties:

East: Golf Course
North: 2-story 1929 Single Family Home
South: 1-story 1960 Single Family Home
West: 2-story Single Family Home under construction.

THE PROJECT:

The applicant has submitted plans prepared by **21 ArchD studio and Ariel Valdes, AIA** dated, signed and sealed May 9, 2021.

The applicant is proposing to construct a new two-story single family home on a site containing a significant pre-1942 home.

The applicant is requesting the following waiver(s):

1. DRB WAIVER, Sec. 142-105(b)(6) Roof decks. Roof decks shall not exceed six inches

above the main roofline and shall not exceed a combined deck area of 25 percent of the enclosed floor area immediately one floor below, regardless of deck height. Roof decks shall be setback a minimum of ten feet from each side of the exterior outer walls, when located along a front or side elevation, and from the rear elevation for non-waterfront lots. Built in planters, gardens or similar landscaping areas, not to exceed three and one-half feet above the finished roof deck height, may be permitted immediately abutting the roof deck area. All landscape material shall be appropriately secured. The DRB or HPB may forego the required rear deck setback, in accordance with the applicable design review or appropriateness criteria.

The applicant is requesting the following variance(s):

1. A variance to eliminate the minimum required 10'-0" setback from the perimeter of the enclosed floor below for a covered structure above the roof in order to construct a roof top structure flush with the rear edge of the building walls below.

PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY AND HARDSHIP CRITERIA

The applicant has submitted plans and documents with the application that satisfy Article 1, Section 2 of the Related Special Acts, allowing the granting of a variance if the Board finds that practical difficulties exist with respect to implementing the proposed project at the subject property.

The applicant has submitted plans and documents with the application that indicate the following, as they relate to the requirements of Section 118-353(d), Miami Beach City Code:

- That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure, or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures, or buildings in the same zoning district;
- That the special conditions and circumstances do not result from the action of the applicant;
- That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings, or structures in the same zoning district;
- That literal interpretation of the provisions of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of this Ordinance and would work unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant;
- That the variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure;
- That the granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of this Ordinance and that such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare; and

- That the granting of this request is consistent with the comprehensive plan and does not reduce the levels of service as set forth in the plan.

COMPLIANCE WITH ZONING CODE:

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the application, as proposed, appears to be inconsistent with the following sections of the City Code, in addition to the requested variance(s):

1. Sec 142-105 (b)(5). The lot coverage calculations shall be revised. Only portions exceeding 5'-0" from the building walls at the rear terrace count in lot coverage.
2. Sec 142-105 (b)(6). The maximum area of the accessible roof deck is 25% of the area of the enclosed floor below. It is not clear what is the area of the accessible roof deck.
3. Sec 142-105 (b)(7) k. The maximum area of the rooftop structure is 20% of the area of the enclosed floor below. It is not clear what is the area of the roof top structure.
4. Section 142-105(b)(8). Survey shall be updated to provide grade elevation in order to determine maximum yard elevations.
5. URBAN HEAT ISLAND ORDINANCE Section 142-106(b)(6) d. Driveways and parking areas that are open to the sky within any required yard shall be composed of porous pavement or shall have a high albedo surface consisting of a durable material or sealant, as defined in section 114- 1 of this Code. (e) Driveways and parking areas composed of asphalt that does not have a high albedo surface, as defined in section 114- 1 of this Code, shall be prohibited.

The above noted comments shall not be considered final zoning review or approval. These and all zoning matters shall require final review and verification by the Zoning Administrator prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

CONSISTENCY WITH 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the proposed **single family home** use appears to be **consistent** with the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan.

COMPLIANCE WITH DESIGN REVIEW CRITERIA:

Design Review encompasses the examination of architectural drawings for consistency with the criteria stated below with regard to the aesthetics, appearances, safety, and function of the structure or proposed structures in relation to the site, adjacent structures and surrounding community. Staff recommends that the following criteria are found to be satisfied, not satisfied or not applicable, as hereto indicated:

1. The existing and proposed conditions of the lot, including but not necessarily limited to topography, vegetation, trees, drainage, and waterways.
Satisfied

2. The location of all existing and proposed buildings, drives, parking spaces, walkways, means of ingress and egress, drainage facilities, utility services, landscaping structures, signs, and lighting and screening devices.
Satisfied
3. The dimensions of all buildings, structures, setbacks, parking spaces, floor area ratio, height, lot coverage and any other information that may be reasonably necessary to determine compliance with the requirements of the underlying zoning district, and any applicable overlays, for a particular application or project.
Satisfied. However, the applicant is requesting a waiver for the roof deck setback at rear and a rear setback variance for a roof top covered structure.
4. The color, design, selection of landscape materials and architectural elements of Exterior Building surfaces and primary public interior areas for Developments requiring a Building Permit in areas of the City identified in section 118-252.
Satisfied
5. The proposed site plan, and the location, appearance and design of new and existing Buildings and Structures are in conformity with the standards of this Ordinance and other applicable ordinances, architectural and design guidelines as adopted and amended periodically by the Design Review Board and Historic Preservation Boards, and all pertinent master plans.
Satisfied. However, the applicant is requesting a waiver for the roof deck setback at rear and a rear setback variance for a roof top covered structure.
6. The proposed Structure, and/or additions or modifications to an existing structure, indicates a sensitivity to and is compatible with the environment and adjacent Structures, and enhances the appearance of the surrounding properties.
Satisfied; However, the applicant is requesting a waiver for the roof deck setback at rear and a rear setback variance for a roof top covered structure.
7. The design and layout of the proposed site plan, as well as all new and existing buildings shall be reviewed so as to provide an efficient arrangement of land uses. Particular attention shall be given to safety, crime prevention and fire protection, relationship to the surrounding neighborhood, impact on contiguous and adjacent Buildings and lands, pedestrian sight lines and view corridors.
Satisfied
8. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic movement within and adjacent to the site shall be reviewed to ensure that clearly defined, segregated pedestrian access to the site and all buildings is provided for and that all parking spaces are usable and are safely and conveniently arranged; pedestrian furniture and bike racks shall be considered. Access to the Site from adjacent roads shall be designed so as to interfere as little as possible with traffic flow on these roads and to permit vehicles a rapid and safe ingress and egress to the Site.
Satisfied

9. Lighting shall be reviewed to ensure safe movement of persons and vehicles and reflection on public property for security purposes and to minimize glare and reflection on adjacent properties. Lighting shall be reviewed to assure that it enhances the appearance of structures at night.
Not Satisfied; a lighting plan was not submitted.
10. Landscape and paving materials shall be reviewed to ensure an adequate relationship with and enhancement of the overall Site Plan design.
Satisfied
11. Buffering materials shall be reviewed to ensure that headlights of vehicles, noise, and light from structures are adequately shielded from public view, adjacent properties and pedestrian areas.
Satisfied
12. The proposed structure has an orientation and massing which is sensitive to and compatible with the building site and surrounding area and which creates or maintains important view corridor(s).
Satisfied
13. The building has, where feasible, space in that part of the ground floor fronting a street or streets which is to be occupied for residential or commercial uses; likewise, the upper floors of the pedestal portion of the proposed building fronting a street, or streets shall have residential or commercial spaces, shall have the appearance of being a residential or commercial space or shall have an architectural treatment which shall buffer the appearance of the parking structure from the surrounding area and is integrated with the overall appearance of the project.
Satisfied
14. The building shall have an appropriate and fully integrated rooftop architectural treatment which substantially screens all mechanical equipment, stairs and elevator towers.
Satisfied
15. An addition on a building site shall be designed, sited and massed in a manner which is sensitive to and compatible with the existing improvement(s).
Not Applicable
16. All portions of a project fronting a street or sidewalk shall incorporate an architecturally appropriate amount of transparency at the first level in order to achieve pedestrian compatibility and adequate visual interest.
Satisfied
17. The location, design, screening and buffering of all required service bays, delivery bays, trash and refuse receptacles, as well as trash rooms shall be arranged so as to have a minimal impact on adjacent properties.
Satisfied

18. In addition to the foregoing criteria, subsection [118-]104(6)(t) of the city Code shall apply to the design review board's review of any proposal to place, construct, modify or maintain a wireless communications facility or other over the air radio transmission or radio reception facility in the public rights-of-way.

Not Applicable

19. The structure and site complies with the sea level rise and resiliency review criteria in Chapter 133, Article II, as applicable.

Not Satisfied

COMPLIANCE WITH SEA LEVEL RISE AND RESILIENCY REVIEW CRITERIA

Section 133-50(a) of the Land Development establishes review criteria for sea level rise and resiliency that must be considered as part of the review process for board orders. The following is an analysis of the request based upon these criteria:

- (1) A recycling or salvage plan for partial or total demolition shall be provided.
Not Satisfied
A recycling plan shall be provided as part of the submittal for a demolition/building permit to the building department.
- (2) Windows that are proposed to be replaced shall be hurricane proof impact windows.
Satisfied
- (3) Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows, shall be provided.
Satisfied
- (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.
Satisfied
- (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.
Satisfied
- (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 of up to three (3) additional feet in height.
Satisfied
- (7) In all new projects, all critical mechanical and electrical systems shall be located above base flood elevation. Due to flooding concerns, all redevelopment projects shall,

whenever practicable, and economically reasonable, move all critical mechanical and electrical systems to a location above base flood elevation.

Satisfied

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

Not Applicable

- (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.

Not Applicable

- (10) In all new projects, water retention systems shall be provided.

Not Satisfied

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

Not Satisfied

- (12) The project design shall minimize the potential for a project causing a heat island effect on site.

Not Satisfied

STAFF ANALYSIS:

DESIGN REVIEW

The applicant is proposing to construct a new two-story residence to replace an existing pre-1942 residence on an interior parcel. The proposed design seeks one design waiver as part of this application. The first floor elevation of the new residence is proposed at base flood elevation (8' NGVD) plus a minimum free board of one foot (+9' NGVD). The application is seeking one design waiver.

The applicant is proposing a modestly size home designed in a contemporary style that is inspired by historic Miami Beach. The design waiver pertains to the rear setback of the roof deck. As per the City code, proposed roof decks shall be setback ten (10') feet from the exterior outer walls of the rear elevation on non-waterfront lots. The applicant is proposing a roof deck that complies with the required setbacks on the front and sides, but at the rear is flush, or setback 0'-0", with the exterior rear walls, 5'-0" from the roof slab edge at rear, and 61'-5" from the rear property line, where a 20' setback is required for the rear yard. The contemporary style home is designed with an overall height of 24'-0". The modest sized home, with 26% lot coverage, and its significant rear setback of 61'-5" mitigates the roof deck's impact on the adjacent rear neighbor. As such, staff is supportive of the waiver.

Overall, staff is supportive of the design, but recommends that a defined pedestrian path from the sidewalk into the site be provided.

VARIANCE ANALYSIS

The project includes the following variance:

1. A variance to eliminate the minimum required 10'-0" setback from the perimeter of the enclosed floor below for a covered structure above the roof in order to construct a roof top structure flush with the rear edge of the building walls below.
 - Variance requested from:

Section 142-105. Development regulations and area requirements.

(b) The development regulations for the RS-1, RS-2, RS-3, RS-4 single-family residential districts are as follows:

(7) Height exceptions. The height regulation exceptions contained in section 142-1161 shall not apply to the RS-1, RS-2, RS-3 and RS-4 zoning districts. The following exceptions shall apply, and unless otherwise specified in terms of height and location, shall not exceed ten feet above the roofline of the structure.

k. Covered structures, which are open on all sides, and do not extend interior habitable space. Such structures shall not exceed a combined area of 20 percent of the enclosed floor area immediately one floor below, and shall be set back a minimum of ten feet from the perimeter of the enclosed floor below.

This variance request is associated with the covered structure at the roof level. The structure is located on the accessible roof deck proposed as an outdoor amenity positioned at the center rear of the main structure. These features are required to be setback 10'-0" from the perimeter of the enclosed floor below to ensure that the privacy of abutting properties is not diminished or negatively impacted through the introduction of a neighbor's active roof deck.

By requiring a minimum setback for these structures and accessible roof deck, line of sight into neighboring yards are minimized. In this instance, the impact could occur on the rear of the property, as the structure and roof deck area comply with the 10'-0" setback from both sides of the floor below. The roof top structure and accessible roof deck are located approximately 60'-0" from the rear property line following the enclosed floor below. Staff would note that if the main structure was designed with the minimum rear setback of 20'-0", the rooftop covered structure proposed could be constructed at 30'-0" from the rear property line and fully comply with the minimum requirements of the code. Due to the large setback proposed and the setback requirement for rooftop structure measured specifically from the perimeter of the enclosed floor below, a variance is being requested.

Staff would note that the new single family home is proposed with a lot coverage and unit size significantly below the maximum allowed. As the location of the roof top covered structure is significantly setback from the rear property line, it is not expected to negatively impact the neighboring property. Staff finds that in this case, the proposed increased rear setback of the main home creates the practical difficulties that result in the variance requested. Although staff is supportive of the applicant's request, the dimensions of the rooftop covered structure and the accessible roof deck area are not clear on the plans. This requirement must be satisfied at the time of building permit review to comply with the maximum area allowed.

RECOMMENDATION:

In view of the foregoing analysis, staff recommends the application be **approved**, including the variance requested, subject to the conditions enumerated in the attached Draft Order, which address the inconsistencies with the aforementioned Design Review, Sea Level Rise criteria and Hardship and Practical Difficulties criteria, as applicable.