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December 22, 2020

Mr. Kyle Klopfer
GSM Capital, LLC
135 Main Street, Suite 850
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: 5800 North Bay Road
Miami Beach, Florida

Dear Mr. Klopfer:

As you requested, yesterday I visited the above-referenced property to perform a preliminary tree survey/evaluation. It was reported that there is a prospective buyer of the property who would like to know if there are any existing trees on the site that may prohibit renovation of the property. To accomplish this task, I walked the site and took general notes regarding the existing tree species, quantities, sizes, and conditions, and assessed any potential issues that could impact tree permitting decisions by the City of Miami Beach.

City of Miami Beach Code Requirements

If the proposed renovation will require removal, relocation, or severe pruning of existing trees, permits from the City of Miami Beach will be required. "Specimen" trees (those with trunk diameters greater than 12 inches) and native species are more difficult to permit. All tree removals will require mitigation with tree replacements and/or monetary contributions to the Tree Preservation Trust Fund. City staff may deny tree removal, relocation, or pruning permits if specific criteria are not met. In addition, any trees to remain must be adequately protected from damage during construction, as per city requirements. To this end, I surveyed the existing trees on the site to determine if any would present significant challenges for permitting.

General Site Conditions

This site has a large number of trees on it and a review of the aerial photos on the Miami-Dade County website shows that there is at least 80% canopy coverage on the lot. The only open areas are over part of the house and north drive area, and the pool deck, even though there are 24 coconut palms (*Cocos nucifera*) and a cluster of Christmas palms (*Adonidia merrillii*) on or near the pool deck.

The pool deck is shown below:



There is an extraordinary number of trees on the site, the majority of which are palms. In general, palms are fairly easy to permit, as they are often relocatable (no mitigation requirements) and mitigation for the smaller ones is minimal. However, there will not likely be enough space for all of them to be relocated on-site. City staff will likely accept a proposal to retain some, relocate some, and remove and mitigate the remainder.

There are thirteen hardwood trees on the site, about half of which are growing on and over the rock walls on the north and south perimeters. Six native strangler fig trees (*Ficus aurea*) in the backyard area are of significant concern, as is a large lofty fig (*Ficus altissima*) on the south perimeter wall. Three other hardwoods are also of some concern. The remainder will require permitting but should present fewer challenges.

Below I address the existing trees by area:

Front Wall Area

There are approximately 28 Senegal date palms (*Phoenix reclinata*) planted on both sides of the front wall and 6 royal palms (*Roystonea regia*) outside the wall. These palms will meet the definition of “specimen trees” due to their trunk sizes. The royal palms are all greater than 12 inches in trunk diameter and if the multiple stems on the Senegal date palms are summed, they will also exceed the minimum size requirements. Consequently, they will be carefully reviewed by city staff. They are good candidates for relocation if there is adequate space on the site.



Entry Drive

There are approximately 70 royal palms inside the gate, on either side of the entry drive, virtually all of which are specimen size. Several are damaged. Those which are not damaged could be proposed for relocation, however, there are so many of them, there is not likely enough space on the site. In this case, they could be donated to the city (if they accept them) and relocated off-site, or mitigated.

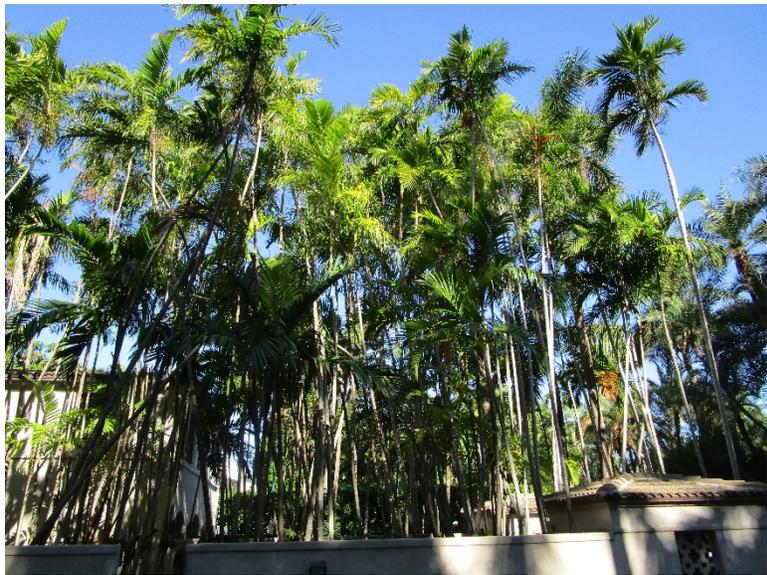


Courtyard, Athletic Field, and North Drive

In the courtyard on the east side of the house there are 16 Chinese fan palms (*Livistona chinensis*). These non-native palms could be removed and mitigated, or relocated if necessary.



Along the walkway from the courtyard toward the athletic field there are dozens of (possibly one hundred or more?) Christmas palms and solitaire palms (*Ptychosperma elegans*). There are so many of them, most will need to be mitigated.



There are also solitaire palms and a few royal palms near the north drive. These could be relocated or mitigated.



There are Brazilian beautyleaf (*Calophyllum brasiliense*) hedges in several locations on the east side of the property. Hedges are exempt from permitting.



North Side of House

On the north side of the house, adjacent to the perimeter wall, there is a row of traveler's trees (*Ravenala madagascariensis*). They meet the definition of specimen trees but would likely be permitted for removal, provided mitigation is provided. They could be relocated if desired but there could be underground utilities in this location that could be damaged. Their close proximity to the wall may also make it logistically difficult to get them out. They could remain or be mitigated. There are a few Christmas palms in this location as well. They could be retained, removed, or relocated.



Motorcourt

In the motorcourt there is one cassia tree (*Cassia* sp.) and a cluster of 10 thatch palms (*Thrinax radiata*). The cassia tree measures 12 inches in trunk diameter, just barely meeting the city’s definition of a “specimen tree”. It is in good condition, readily accessible, and a very good candidate for relocation. Therefore, it should not present any major challenges for permitting. The thatch palms are native and therefore, relocation should be considered rather than removal.



Backyard

In the backyard, near the southwest corner of the house there is a large specimen native strangler fig tree (*Ficus aurea*). It is most likely within the buildable area but will still be carefully evaluated by city staff if removal, relocation, or severe pruning are proposed. If it is proposed to remain, staff will assess any potential impacts to the tree from the proposed construction (i.e., root damage, canopy pruning, etc.).



This tree is in fair to poor condition due to previous pruning, storm damage, and subsequent wood decay. Several large limbs or leaders have been removed or ripped off during storms, leaving large open wounds that have decayed.



There is an active beehive in one of those decayed areas, suggesting the decay cavity is quite deep.



At least one buttress root was damaged and decayed.



Many of the larger branches have been reduced using heading cuts, which according to industry standards, is an unacceptable pruning practice.



In my professional opinion, this tree could possibly remain where it is for several more years, but its structure has been compromised and its health is at stake. It is not a good candidate for relocation due to the damage and decay. If it is to remain, you will have to provide a detailed tree protection plan showing protection of its roots, trunks, and canopy. If this tree cannot remain where it is, I would recommend removal. However, you may need to provide more extensive evidence to city staff before they will approve a tree removal permit. If approved, mitigation for this approximately 60-inch diameter tree would likely be about \$20,000.

In the southwest corner of the property there are 5 smaller strangler figs. Due to their size and location, I suspect they were relocated to this area from elsewhere on- or off-site. Most have multiple leaders which, if added together, will likely make them “specimen trees”. Therefore, city staff will carefully evaluate them. They are generally in good condition and good candidates for relocation, if city staff will approve. It is possible they would permit some of them for removal, but not a certainty. The largest one shown below, far left, is in good condition and should be proposed to remain or relocate.

Five strangler figs in southwest corner.



North and South Perimeter Walls

There are several *Ficus* species trees growing near and over the walls along the north and south property lines. The largest of these is on the south side, near the motorcourt. It is a non-native lofty fig (*Ficus altissima*). It is a huge tree in very good condition and providing extensive canopy coverage.



This species is on Miami-Dade County's list of prohibited species but in the City of Miami Beach, it requires a permit like any other tree except, if removed, there is no permit fee. Mitigation is still required and it would be significant (probably \$30,000 to \$40,000). The tree is not within the buildable area and in my opinion, it will be very difficult to obtain a tree removal permit for this tree. There could also be public opposition to its removal. Due to its size and location, it is not a good candidate for relocation. Therefore, I recommend that this tree be retained. This will require limited (none) construction activity within the area beneath its canopy and pruning will be limited to no more than 25% canopy reduction throughout the entire canopy (not just on one side). This tree will be the greatest limitation to renovation/development on this site.

Also along the south wall near the west end is a strangler fig. It is specimen size and in fair condition. It could not be successfully relocated, therefore, retention or removal would be recommended. Since it is native and not within the buildable area, city staff could deny a removal permit, but might issue one with more information. If removed, it would require mitigation (probably about \$12,000 to \$14,000).



On the east end of the south wall there is a rubber tree (*Ficus elastica*). This is a non-native *Ficus* species of limited value. It cannot be relocated and should either be retained or removed. Removal would probably be permitted, but mitigation will be required.



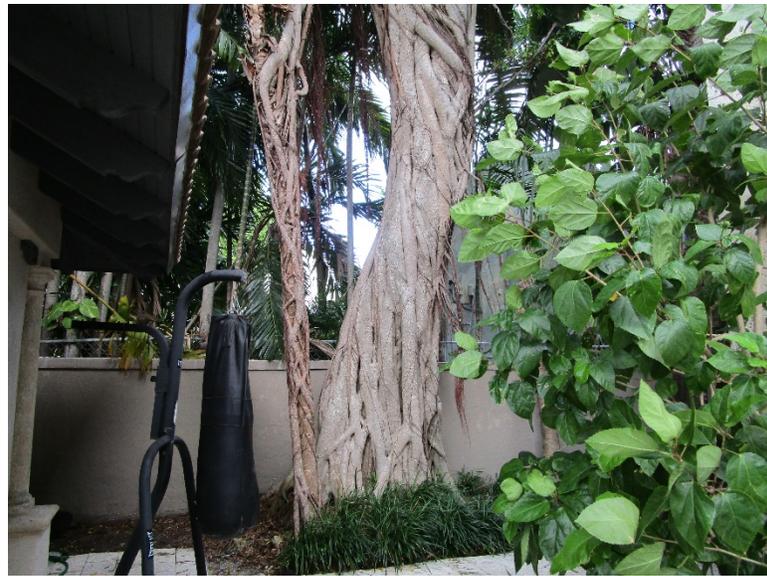
In the mid-section of the south wall there is a fairly small weeping fig (*Ficus benjamina*). It is non-native and generally an undesirable species. It can be removed but mitigation will be required.



On the north wall, near the west end, there is an Indian laurel (*Ficus microcarpa*). This is a prohibited species for which you might obtain a permit, but may need to provide greater substantiation. It is outside the buildable area and highly visible from the water. Its roots could be adversely impacting the wall and/or the utilities on the wall, which could be a factor in permitting its removal. It is not possible to relocate it. After the lofty fig and the strangler fig near the house, this tree most likely poses the greatest permitting challenge. If it is permitted for removal, mitigation would be required (probably about \$20,000).



There is another Indian laurel on the north wall, just east of the cabana, outside of the buildable area. It might also be permitted for removal, but greater substantiation may be needed and mitigation would be required (probably about \$14,000 to \$16,000).



Summary

In summary, the majority of trees on this site are palms. The smaller size palms could readily be permitted for removal, but mitigation will be required. Many of the larger palms could be relocated on-site or donated to the City for off-site relocation. There are too many palms to relocate all of them on-site, therefore, a combination of retention, relocation, and removal/mitigation is probably warranted and city staff would likely approve this action.

The greatest challenges to permitting will be the strangler fig by the southwest corner of the house and the lofty fig on the south wall. The strangler fig is damaged and located in the buildable area, therefore, it should be possible to permit its removal; however, city staff will likely require significantly more information before doing so.

It would likely be very difficult to obtain a tree removal permit for the large lofty fig on the south wall. Therefore, I recommend that it be proposed to remain and protected from any construction activity.

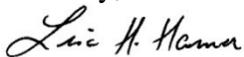
The other Ficus trees on the walls could probably be permitted for removal, provided they are mitigated. The two on the north wall may be more difficult and require additional substantiation.

The five smaller strangler figs in the southwest corner will likely be carefully reviewed by city staff. Tree removal permits may be difficult to obtain, but probably not impossible. The simplest approach may be to propose that they be retained or relocated elsewhere on-site.

In summary, there are relatively few challenging trees on this site compared with the total quantity of trees. However, at least two trees and as many as ten, may be difficult to permit. Due to the large number of trees and several large-size trees, mitigation can be expected to be substantial. Since there is limited space on the site for new trees, much of the mitigation will likely have to be a monetary contribution to the City.

This concludes my report. Thank you for calling on me to assist with this project. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or additional needs for assistance.

Sincerely,



Lisa H. Hammer, RCA
Horticultural Consultant

cc: Jeffrey Bercow