



December 6, 2021

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

RE: DRB21-0755 – Design Review Approval for the Property located at 424 E Di Lido Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139

Dear Mr. Belush,

We are excited to present to you our application for approval of a new two-story single-family residence with an understory at 424 East Di Lido Drive in Miami Beach (the “Site”). The applicant’s goal is to build a new, resilient home that adapts to the changing climate and sea level rise, with the least impact to the pedestrian experience. Please consider this letter to serve as the letter of intent in connection with a request to the Design Review Board (“DRB”) for approval of a new understory below the elevated home. No other waivers or variances are being sought as part of the application.

The Site is currently occupied by a post-1942 single-family residence with a finished floor elevation of 6.58’ NGVD. The home appears to have been modified over time and does not contribute to the character of Miami Beach in any significant way. Additionally, the height of the finished floor is more than three feet below the required flood elevation. Due to the age of the home and the height of the floor, the structure is functionally obsolete and prohibits development that complies with current land development regulations. For these reasons the owner is seeking to replace the existing structure in its entirety for a new structure. The total lot area of the Site is 7,366 square feet and does not contain any significant specimen trees. The property is located at the intersection of East Di Lido Drive and the Venetian Causeway, within the RS-4 Zoning District.

The proposed development intends to properly adapt to the anticipated sea level rise of Biscayne Bay, without creating a development that is out of context with the vibrant Venetian Causeway neighborhood. The development will consist of two-habitable floors above an understory which will contain building access, storage, an outdoor bathroom and accessory parking. The project is before the board due to the inclusion of an understory area. The understory was designed to reduce the impact of vehicle parking on the street-front and create an inviting entry to the home, while still exceeding the minimum code requirements for freeboard. The design attempts to balance a new, modern aesthetic, while referencing the historic character of Miami Beach. The tower element is brought towards East Di Lido Drive to serve as the main pedestrian entrance, while screening views of the parking area that is located behind it. The tower parapet wall is also used to screen the mechanical equipment that is located above the roof.

The proposed design does not require design waivers or variances. The new home embraces the character of the surrounding neighborhood and complies with the code requirements for setbacks, unit size and lot coverage. The height of the main home with a flat roof is 24 feet above the BFE + Freeboard, which is within the limits for the RS-4 zoning district. Additionally, the proposed unit size is approximately 3,542 sf (48%) which is under the maximum permitted unit size (50%). The proposed lot

coverage exceeds twenty-five percent (25%) and therefore provides the additional street-front setbacks required by the code, as well as the other setback requirements required for the structure.

As mentioned, the design of the home is centered on resiliency and therefore advances the sea level criteria in Section 133-50(a) of the City Code. Please note each criteria below:

1. A recycling or salvage plan for partial or total demolition shall be provided
 - A recycling and salvage plan for demolition of the existing home will be provided at permitting
2. Windows that are proposed to be replaced shall be hurricane proof impact windows
 - All windows and doors will be impact-resistant and suitable for the High Velocity Hurricane Zone (HVHZ)
3. Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows shall be provided
 - The design of the home incorporates large operable windows and doors in all habitable rooms, where feasible
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 landscape design has taken this criteria into consideration when selecting the plant list
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.
 - Sea level rise has been a driving force in the design of this project. The yard area has been raised to the minimum grade level suggested by the City of Miami Beach, and the project is utilizing the maximum freeboard permitted by the City for such projects.
6. The ground floor, driveways, and garage ramping for new construction shall be adaptable to the raising of public rights-of-way 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 additional feet in height.
 - The design of all ground floor driveways has taken into consideration raising of the streets surrounding the property and can be adapted over time as required.
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.
 - All systems are designed to be located above the Base Flood Elevation, and most critical systems are located either on the first elevated floor or rooftop.
8. Existing buildings shall, wherever reasonably feasible and economically appropriate, be elevated up to base flood elevation, plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard.
 - This project exceeds all minimum requirements for elevation.
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 54 of the city Code.
 - The understory is designed to be wet-flood-proofed and all enclosed space will be designed to neutralize hydrostatic pressures during a flood event
10. As applicable to all new construction, stormwater retention systems shall be provided.
 - Where feasible, water-retention systems will be provided in combination with permeable paving materials and landscaped space

11. Cool pavement materials or porous pavement materials shall be utilized.
 - Cool pavement and porous pavement materials will be utilized where possible.
12. The design of each project shall minimize the potential for heat island effects on-site
 - The proposed design provides landscaped open spaces, large overhangs to increase shading, minimal paving and mature shade trees in order to minimize the potential for heat island effects on site.

While prices continue to fluctuate in the construction market, we anticipate the cost of construction will be approximately 1.4 to 1.5 millions dollars.

In conclusion, the owner's goal is to design a home that responds to both the pedestrian character of the neighborhood, while ensuring safety and resiliency for a future that will likely experience higher, and more often, flooding events. Granting approval of this design will ensure the new residence will survive many years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Hendon', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Dakota Hendon, A.I.A.