

PETER P. LURIA

Re: File No. DRB21-0722 - 1649 W 22 Street

January 18, 2022

Request denial of height waiver.

Dear Design Review Board Members:

My wife, Pam Luria and I reside at 1800 West 23rd Street. We purchased our home in 1993.

We ask that you deny *any* waiver of height for this proposed project, that would demolish an existing house and build a “Tropical Modern style” residence across the narrow canal opposite our architecturally significant 1936 home. Of the three (3) nearest neighbors, two (2) have pre-1942 architecturally significant homes and all of us are opposing these waivers.

This board’s review criteria includes *sensitivity to and compatibility with the environment and adjacent structures*. [Sec. 118-251(a)(6), City Code.]

The proposed project fails to respect the adjacent structures, the importance of the historical context represented by our pre-1942 architecturally significant home, and the historical and cultural attributes of these small islands which are mentioned in the “Sunset Islands Bridges...Historic Structures Designation Report”(1996)*. Ours is one of the original homes built on the historic Sunset Islands. John F. Kennedy once slept in this house.

A. Specific details about the project and its impacts.

The proposed house is a massive two (2) story structure extending from one side of the property to the other. The proposed house is already more than double the size of the existing one and is being built 30 ft closer to the canal.

The First Floor Elevation: +11’.0” NGVD + the maximum 24’.0” flat roof = 35’.0”. In comparison, the single-story house directly adjacent has a First Floor Elevation: +5’.0” NGVD + 12’.0” = 17’.0”. The proposed house, without any height waiver, will be more than twice that height and would simply overwhelm the house next door.

The roof deck doesn’t normally add volume or mass but a height waiver definitely does. To add to our concerns, the applicant is building a covered rooftop deck. This will effectively increase the height of the house by an additional 11’.0” in that area. While they are entitled to have a covered rooftop deck, **the height waiver is NOT something that they are entitled to as of right.**

The original staff report states: "While there is a new 2-story home with an approved four (4') foot height waiver to the southwest...it is important to note that this abutting property is on the wide opening from the canal to Biscayne Bay, with a much larger distance to the nearest property across the waterway, as compared to the subject site."

The fact that a new house adjacent to the proposed house on the wide open Bay received a height waiver has no bearing. It is not a valid reason for the applicant to get one, despite what their attorneys are telling you. Therefore, we ask that you deny any height waiver.

B. Other things we would ask you to consider in order to minimize the impact on the neighbors:

1. Incorporate more and larger solid elements for the waterside facade than are proposed. This would provide added privacy for neighbors across the canal and would emit less light at night so as not to diminish our view of Miami across the bay.
2. Require non-reflective glass to eliminate the sun's glare reflecting on the homes across the canal.
3. Deny the waiver for the east side elevation that abuts the single story home next door.
4. Retain the large specimen Tamarind tree in the front of the property.
5. Require the immediate installation of a construction fence to be chained and locked because the existing house is vacant. Neighbors do not want the site to become a haven for trespassers like the single family lot next door was prior to commencement of construction.
6. Allay the residents' concerns that the unoccupied property will not become the site of overflow or 3rd party parking by the contractor that is building the two houses next door.

These are reasonable requests that the applicant can easily accommodate.

In summary, our concerns involve privacy, minimizing the impact to the neighborhood, light pollution, respect for the historic context of the Sunset Islands and the preservation of our pre-1942 architecturally significant home.

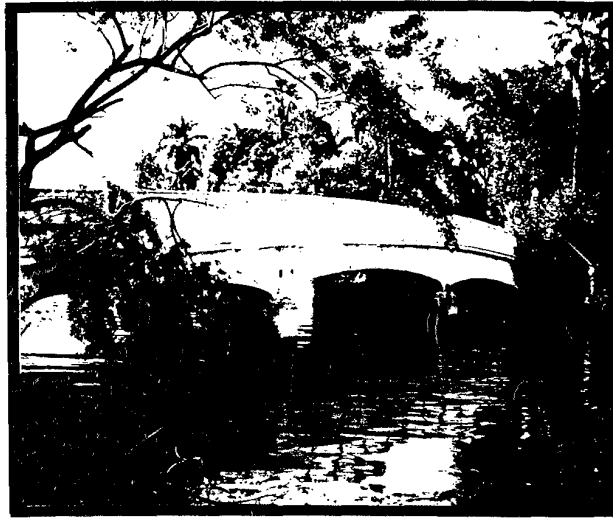
Granting this application with associated waivers, will have a detrimental impact on the neighbors. All of us have lived in this neighborhood for decades. These reasonable accommodations should be required of the applicant.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully / Peter and Pamela Luria

SUNSET ISLANDS BRIDGES
Nos. 1, 2 AND 4

MIAMI BEACH
HISTORIC STRUCTURES
DESIGNATION REPORT



Sunset Islands Bridge #1, constructed in 1929.

Prepared By:
City of Miami Beach
Planning, Design and Historic Preservation Division
August 1996