

May 16, 2022

City of Miami Beach  
Planning Department  
1700 Convention Center Drive  
Miami Beach, FL 33139



RE: **281 Palm Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33139**  
**DRB #: DRB22-0817**

## LETTER OF INTENT

Dear Members of the City of Miami Beach Design Review Board (DRB),

Debowsky Design Group, the Architecture Firm, is submitting to the Miami Beach Design Review Board, a Final Submittal (DRB22-0817), on behalf of the client, Dr. Keith DeSousa (hereinafter referred to as "Applicant").

The purpose of this submittal is to seek approval for a new two-story residence, to be located at 281 Palm Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33139, Folio No. 02-4205-002-0430 (hereinafter referred to as "Property").

## THE PROPERTY:

The Property is located at 281 Palm Avenue, in a Single-Family Residential District #4 (RS-4). Currently, the property site consists of one existing lot with one existing single family residential structure, built in 1938, which does not comply with, and has an existing habitable finished floor below the latest flood height set forth by FEMA.

The existing residence does not have any original construction permits, as it was built in 1938.

The width of the lot is 50 feet and the depth of the lot is 120 feet.

The existing structure is a total of 1,936 square feet according to the Office of the Property Appraiser.

## APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL:

The Applicant is proposing to demolish the existing structure, and replace it with a new two-story home, in a modern style, in compliance with the latest flood height set forth by FEMA.

The proposed façade presents a modern box using natural materials, including wood details and stucco walls. The proposed site plan incorporates natural hardscape finishes set in sand with improved landscaping.

The proposed new residence complies with the Miami Beach Code requirements (hereinafter referred to as "Code"), with the exception of a 40 square foot (0.67%) overage of 'Maximum Total Unit Size'. The Required 'Maximum Total Unit Size' is 3,000 square feet, and the 'Provided Total Unit Size' is 3,040 square feet.

There is also a deficiency by 196 square feet (13.06%) of the required rear (front) yard pervious landscape minimum. However, the Total Proposed Open Area exceeds the required 3,000 square feet (50% of the lot) by 831 square feet (13.85% excess). The Total Proposed Open Area is 3,831 square feet (63.85%).

The Applicant seeks the ability to request a variance for these aforementioned items. The approval by the Design Review Board for these aforementioned items would allow the design of the residence to incorporate properly sized bedrooms on the Second Floor and a sufficient driveway to the unenclosed parking area under the residence on the Understory Level at the rear entrance of the property off of North Coconut Lane.

In compliance with the Code for total floor area, unit size, and lot coverage for the 6,000 square foot lot of this Property, the total floor area and unit size of habitable living space proposed is 2,824 square feet (47.07%) for the First and Second Floors, and 3,040 square feet (50.67%) if the non-habitable Roof Terrace is included. As previously stated, the Applicant seeks a waiver for the 0.67% overage of Total Unit Size.

Although it is not required in the floor area and unit size calculations to include non-habitable space, the total gross floor area including the non-habitable Understory is 4,276 square feet.

The lot coverage of the non-habitable Understory is 1,236 square feet (20.60%), which complies with the required 1,800 square feet (30%) of the lot size.

In compliance with the setbacks, the residence is located behind the required front yard setbacks of 30 feet, as well as behind the required side setbacks of 7 feet and 6 inches. A rear setback is not applicable, as the Property has two main street frontages; one frontage on Palm Avenue and the other frontage on North Coconut Lane. In this case, the front of the property will follow the addressed frontage (281 Palm Ave.) on Palm Avenue, and the rear of the property will be the frontage on North Coconut Lane.

In addition, the residence also complies with the Zoning Code required height limit of 24 feet & 2 stories of habitable floors, which include a habitable First Floor and Second Floor. The understory is not habitable. It is unenclosed and open, allowing for water to pass, meeting the required five feet of freeboard, and meeting the latest required flood height set forth by FEMA.

We believe that the approval of this new well-designed residence meets the Code, as well as the Miami Beach design considerations. The design is consistent with the character of the neighborhood, and will be a great improvement to the property and contextual area.

On behalf of the Applicant, we look forward to your favorable review, and we respectfully request that the DRB consider this new residence for approval.

If you have any questions or comments in regards to the application, and should any additional information be required, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Stuart Debowsky, AIA, President  
Architect of Record  
AR #94898