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VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

December 12, 2022

Deborah Tackett, Chief of Historic Preservation
Planning Department, Second Floor
City of Miami Beach
1700 Convention Center Drive, 2nd Floor
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

RE: **HPB22-0543** – Request for Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition and Design and One Waiver for Proposed Multi-Family Building Located at 1709 Jefferson Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida

Dear Debbie:

This law firm represents 1688 Property Owner, LLC (the "Applicant") in their application for the proposed development located at 1709 Jefferson Avenue ("Property"). Please consider this letter the Applicant's letter of intent in support of a Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition and Design for a new, 24-unit apartment building ("Proposed Development").

Property Description. The Property is a non-contributing development site approximately 22,500 square feet (0.51 acres) in size and is located at the northeast corner of 17th Street and Jefferson Avenue. The Property consists of one (1) parcel identified by Miami-Dade County Folio No. 02-3234-007-0400. The Property is located in the Palm View local Historic District and is zoned RM-1, Residential Multifamily Low Intensity District ("RM-1"), a zoning district allowing a wide range of commercial uses, including hotel use as a main permitted use. See Figure 1, below. Currently, the Property operates as a privately-owned parking lot servicing the office tenants located at 1688 Meridian Avenue. Miami-Dade County Public Records show that a 2-story, single-family structure was located on the property between the years 1940 and 1947 and later demolished.

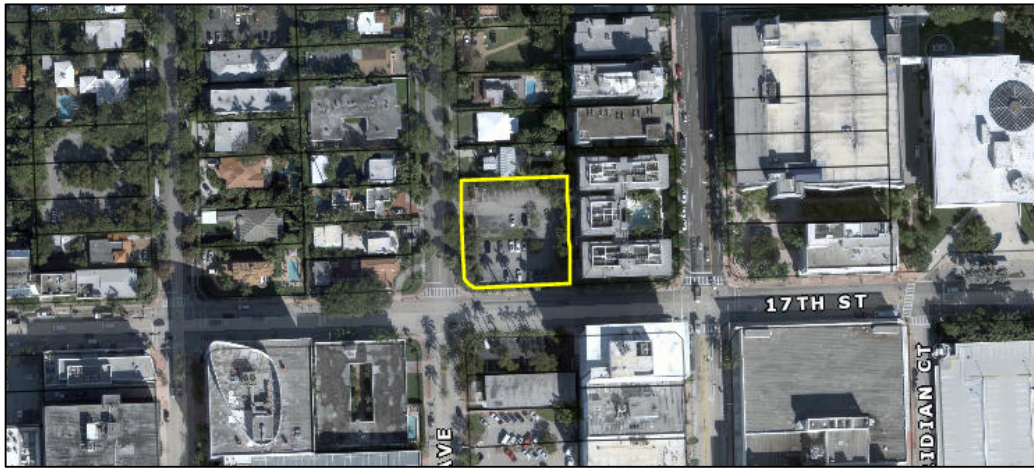


Figure 1

Palm View Local Historic District. As stated above, the Property is located within the Palm View Local Historic District. The Palm View Local Historic District represents the rapid rate of development in Miami Beach beginning with the City's first major land development period from 1915 to 1926. There are ten (10) architectural styles represented in the Palm View Local Historic District that range from Masonry Vernacular to Mediterranean Revival, through Med/Deco Transitional to Streamline Moderne, then evolving into the Post World War II Modern and Garden Apartment styles. The development of the area culminated with the construction of the row of post-World War II apartment buildings on Meridian Avenue. Between the 1920's and 1930's, building forms in the Art Deco style were typically angular and clean, with stepped back facades, symmetrical or asymmetrical massing and strong vertical accenting. The preferred decorative language included geometric patterns.

Between the 1930's and 1940's, Streamline Moderne evolved in Miami Beach. Modern transportation and industrial design began to have an even greater impact upon new construction. The streamlined character of automobiles, airplanes, trains, buses, ocean liners, and even home appliances inspired powerful horizontal design compositions, accentuated by striking vertical features and punctuated by icons of the technological era. Racing stripe banding and deck railings like those found on grand ocean liners, were among the unique features to set this architecture apart from anything before it. Street corners became inviting architectural focal points, whether the special treatment employed was based upon curves or angles. Like earlier Art Deco buildings, the Streamline Moderne style incorporated smooth and articulated stucco, architectural glass block, keystone, and a variety of metals used in detailing. Predominating surfaces became smooth, planar, and aerodynamic in character.

After World War II to 1965, the Post War Modern style became prominent in Miami Beach. The Post War Modern style exhibited many elements of its companion style of the period, Post War Deco, but clearly established a path of its own in terms of modern functional simplicity. Essentially the strong design personality of Art Deco, as it evolved over two decades in Miami Beach, significantly gave way to the dictates of function in the Post War Modern seaside resort architecture. Floor plans were commonly reorganized from interior double loaded corridors to "open air" verandas and catwalks on one side or more. Single block massing remained a dominant characteristic, but new functional exterior elements profoundly impacted on design. Symmetrical open staircases became significant exterior design features.

Proposed Development. The Applicant proposes to construct a 24-unit apartment building on the Property that will align with the historical nature of the Palm View Local Historic District and Post War Modern movements. Specifically, the ground floor of the Project will contain an open-air parking garage, business center and indoor fitness space located along Jefferson Avenue and 17th Street. Levels 2 through 4 will contain eight (8) residential units on each level. The Project will contain a rooftop terrace overlooking the Palm View local Historic District. The design of the Proposed Development is in alignment with the Palm View Local Historic District's, Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, and Post War architectural character.

The Proposed Development's building form is angular and clean, similar to Art Deco style buildings in the Palm View Historic District. The Proposed Development also contains Streamline Moderne architectural elements. For example, the Proposed Development contains strong horizontal design compositions, which are accented by vertical louvers along all levels of the facades. Streamline Moderne structures emphasized inviting architectural focal points at street corners, which the Proposed Development also emphasizes through the implementation of an outdoor gym area and business center along the Property's ground floor, which activates the structure. The Proposed Development also uses a variety of materials in its detailing, which provides facades that are aerodynamic in character. Last, the Proposed Development respects the Post War Modern style of the Palm View Local Historic District and nearby buildings as the Proposed Development contains "open air" elements, such as open-air walkways and open staircases, and functional exterior elements, such as the outdoor gym area and business center.

Overall, the Proposed Development highlights architectural styles found in the Palm View Local Historic District. The Proposed Development will transform the existing

surface parking lot into a thoughtfully designed apartment building that fits well within the context of the neighborhood.

Parking. The Property is located in Parking District No. 1. Properties in Parking District No. 1 must provide one (1) parking space per dwelling unit between 550 SF and 1600 SF, two (2) parking spaces per dwelling unit above 1,600 SF, and 10% of total required spaces for guest parking. The Applicant is providing sixteen (16) long-term bicycle spaces, which reduced the amount of required parking by three (3) parking spaces. As a result, the total amount of required parking is twenty-four (24) parking spaces. The Applicant is providing twenty-five (25) parking spaces, thus meeting the requirement.

Estimated Cost of Construction. The estimated cost of construction is \$15,000,000.00.

Evaluation of Appropriateness. The Proposed Development fits well within the surrounding commercial and residential context of the area. The Property is adjacent to the Montclair Lofts, a contemporary, 5-story apartment building located at 1700 Meridian Avenue. Across 17th Street are two Post War apartment buildings – the 5-story Jeffersonian Condominium located at 1698 Jefferson Avenue and the 10-story office building located at 1688 Meridian Avenue, originally designed by Morris Lapidus in 1961. The Proposed Development fits well within the context of the surrounding area as the structure itself draws inspiration from the nearby properties to fit within the context of nearby buildings. The Proposed Development effectively activates the ground floor with an outdoor gymnasium and business center, which is in-line with the pedestrian character of the area. Overall, the Proposed Development ensures a high-quality development that respects the residential neighborhood to the north and fits within the commercial context to the south and west.

Waiver Request. The Applicant seeks the following waiver request:

1. A waiver from the requirement of Section 142-155(a)(3)(f)(1) to provide a 10' ground floor where 12' is required ("Waiver Request").

The Applicant respectfully requests Historic Preservation Board approval of the Waiver Request, to permit a ground floor height of 10' where 12' is required. The Waiver Request is feasible and compatible with the Proposed Development. The Applicant is providing ample space and clearance for parking and is requesting the Waiver Request to fit the building envelope within the 40' maximum height permitted in the RM-1 zoning district. Approval of the Waiver Request will

contribute positively to the design of the Proposed Development as the building envelope will fit seamlessly within the 40' allowable height limit.

Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Criteria. The Project advances the sea level rise and resiliency criteria in Section 133-50(a) as follows:

(1) A recycling or salvage plan for partial or total demolition shall be provided.

The Applicant will provide a recycling or salvage plan during permitting.

(2) Windows that are proposed to be replaced shall be hurricane proof impact windows.

The Project will feature hurricane impact windows.

(3) Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows, shall be provided.

Abundant landscaping and permeable materials contribute to passive cooling, which represents a significant improvement from the existing condition.

(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 Applicant has worked to provide landscaping that is appropriate for the Property. The proposed plantings are appropriate for the area and specifically selected to increase flood resilience and improve stormwater drainage on the Property.

(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.

The Applicant will consider the sea level rise projections for the Proposed Development.

(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 up to three (3) additional feet in height.

The Applicant will consider the raising of public rights-of-ways for the Proposed Development.

(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.

Proper precautions will be taken to ensure the critical mechanical and electrical systems are located above base flood elevation.

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

The existing ground floor areas will be, where feasible and appropriate, elevated.

(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.

Wet or dry flood proofing systems will be provided where habitable space is located below BFE.

(10) As applicable to all new construction, water retention systems shall be provided.

Where feasible, water retention systems will be provided.

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

Cool pavement materials and/or porous pavement materials will be utilized.

(12) The design of each project shall minimize the potential for heat island effects on-site.

The Applicant proposes abundant landscaping. These features serve to minimize heat island effect.

Conclusion. Overall, the Proposed Development will transform a surface parking lot into a thoughtfully designed, apartment building that will evoke interest from the streetscape and reinvigorate the surrounding area. The Proposed Development meets the intent of the Code in all respects and improves resilience of the Property. We therefore respectfully request your favorable review and recommendation. If you have any questions or comments, please call me at 305-377-6236.

Sincerely,



Michael W. Larkin