

September 07, 2018

City of Miami Beach
Design Review Board
1700 Convention Center Drive, second floor
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

Re: 316 West Dilido Drive, Miami Beach, Florida.
Architect's Letter of Intent

Members of the Design Review Board,

We have designed a new residence to be located at 316 West Dilido Drive on Miami Beach. The property size is 10,500 square feet, and currently has a residence constructed in 1951 on the property. We intend to demolish the existing residence in order to construct the new one.

The unit size we designed is 5,245 square feet which is compliant with 50% lot coverage. Our footprint is 2,951 square feet which is compliant at 28.1% of lot size. The zoning on the property is RS-3, which allows a 24' roof height from finished first floor by right and can go up to 28' high with a waiver.

We intend to construct the first floor at FEMA Base Flood plus 5', which by right we can do. We also intend on the top of the roof being at 24' high, which also by right we can do. The waivers we will need is the second to first floor ratio, and the side yard height waiver, which is an open space waiver. We are requesting a waiver so that the second floor can be 91.62% of the first floor without the carport roof counted, and 75.42% with the carport roof counted. This can be justified as I will explain in this letter. We are requesting one variance. The variance is so that a planter on the second-floor balcony can encroach into the North and South setbacks.

The planter itself meets the side setback encroachment requirement, as it does not exceed the 25% allowable encroachment. This planter is only approximately 2' in height and adds movement and visual interest to the front and both sides elevations. It is not a vertical element that is not allowable in a side setback encroachment. The planting will also soften the exterior side elevations of the residence and will provide a continuity to the front elevation which also features this planter. We have met with staff and deemed this not an egregious request, thus staff will support this.

We have revised the drawings after our meeting with staff in order to be as compliant with the code as possible. The open carport was originally attached to the residence, but its support columns were set back 20' from the front property line. This would have brought a variance into play. We removed asking for any variance by completely separating the open carport structure from the main residence by 5'. This allowed us to maintain the support columns at 20' and no variance was required. Since there is a separation, and since the area of the carport is less than 500 square feet, this side facing carport will not count towards unit size or lot coverage. As well, we have revised all side setback encroachment items, with the exception of the planters of which we are requesting a variance, that now make the residence compliant with the zoning code. As well, we have reduced the rear balcony depth to the allowable 6' in order to avoid making any

portion of the balcony count toward lot coverage or unit size. The staff was quite helpful in the process of resolving these issues which the original house design contained.

If you refer to the axonometric drawings in our submission, you will notice that there is a great amount of movement in the architecture. We have provided large cutout areas at the center/side of the residence on each side. These cutouts have reflecting ponds whose water level is approximately 4" below the finished floor. The reflecting ponds are about 1'-6" deep. At no point do the high reflecting ponds encroach into the side setbacks. Rather they infinity edge down to adjusted grade level into a water trough. This will not only add interest to the interior of the residence, but will also add interest to the adjoining neighbors, as they will see reflecting ponds with a water cascade facing them. This, I believe, is a vital design element to add interest to the architecture when designing at FEMA plus 5'.

The rear portion of the residence is angled to capture the best views afforded by this property. By doing so, the architecture seems to move, rather than keep its rectangular shape. The actual residence constantly moves in and out in order to add interest to the architecture, thus justifying the additional second floor percentage requested. This, by no means, is a box.

The second-floor bedroom wing at the front of the residence overhangs the entry, thus also creating the additional percentage of second floor to first floor ratio which must be calculated. We use natural elements such as bamboo in order to add a more organic feel to the modern architecture created by the design. There are cascading water features and reflecting ponds at the front of the residence that also interact with the bamboo. We have also designed a thin wood trellis that may be constructed out of aluminum to simulate the wood. This trellis element is designed over the front balcony. This trellis overhang is being used in lieu of a standard concrete roof in order to lighten the feel of the front of the residence, as opposed to a heavier concrete roof appearance. Overall the front of the residence feels lighter and airier than most standard residences designed these days, and also helps to circumvent the second to first floor ratio being sought.

The second-floor area designed over the entry created an issue, as that anything covered over 10' in depth has to count towards floor area (unit size). This is a very vital design element in this residence, so we then reduced the residence size in the front and in the rear giving us less ac square footage. By reducing the overall residence size and counting the front depth required to be counted, we were able to comply with the unit size calculations. This overhang area was always counted in lot coverage, so that was never an issue.

The rear swimming pool has an infinity edge that will cascade down to a water trough at the rear adjusted grade level. This cascade wraps around to the side where the hot spa is located. This feature can be viewed from Biscayne Bay, and will also add interest to the rear yard of the residence. The steps from the upper deck level down to the rear adjusted grade seem to intersect the pool and the hot spa. We feel this is a very interesting design element in creating the design of the rear yard and its uses. The roof deck is designed to maximize at 25% of the roof area size.

To recap, we seek one variance and fully comply with residence size, lot coverage and allowed roof height by right. We seek only two waivers. One is of the side cutout elevation height for the reflecting ponds and to add interest to the architecture, and the second to first floor ratio, which I believe is well explained in this Letter of Intent.

We hope that the DRB finds our requests to be acceptable and grants us approval on each.

Sincerely,

Ralph Choeff, President
Choeff Levy Fischman Architecture + Design