

March 12, 2021

***Via CSS Electronic Submission***

Mr. Thomas Mooney  
Planning Director  
City of Miami Beach  
1700 Convention Center Drive,  
Miami Beach, FL 33139

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness for Partial Demolition and Design Approval of a Glass Storefront Enclosure for 900 Ocean Drive Miami Beach, Florida

Dear Tom:

This law firm represents David Wallack Real Estate, LLC d/b/a Mango's Tropical Café (the "Applicant" or Mango's Tropical Café) with regard to the above-referenced property (the "Property"). Please let the following serve as the required letter of intent in connection with a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Partial Demolition and Design Approval of a Glass Storefront Enclosure.

Description of Property. The Property consists of two (2), two-story (2) structures which were combined into a single Property, and is currently identified by the Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser by Folio No. 02-3234-008-0060. The Property is located on the northwest corner of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Ocean Drive and encompasses approximately 19,052 square feet. It is located in the MXE (Mixed Use Entertainment) zoning district and the Ocean Drive/Collins Avenue Local Historic District. Currently the Property houses restaurant and retail uses.

As previously mentioned, originally, there were two individual structures on the Property which were constructed as apartment buildings back in 1952: the Park Sea and the Surf Sea Apartments. Both structures were designed by architect, Gilbert M. Fein, in a Postwar Modern architectural style. The structures mirrored each other with an open courtyard in the middle. Although not officially unified until the 1970s the structures seemed to have always operated as one. In the 1970, they operated as the Eastern Sun, the first adult congregate living facility (ACLF) in Miami Beach. The buildings were unified to create one cohesive project, and the interior side setbacks of the buildings were used to house an elevator and smaller courtyard. Later, in the 1990's and early 2000's the building again saw change through the incorporation of storefronts, for the first mixed use building on Ocean Drive. A was also erected over the central courtyard and a front entry gate added.

Since its construction the Property has held uses such as hotel, co-op apartments, adult congregate living facilities, and more impressively as the restaurant known as Mango's Tropical Café.



As Mango's Tropical Café the Property has become an international sensation, boasting visitors from all over the world.

Requests. The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for partial demolition and design, in order to incorporate a glass storefront enclosure along the front (east) façade of Mango's Tropical Café. This glass storefront will incorporate a double door vestibule along the Ocean Drive entrance of the Property. This double door vestibule will assist in retaining sounds within the Property and not allow same to permeate throughout the neighborhood in the late night hours. Also, the glass storefront will be less distracting to the original architecture than the existing gate structure. This proposal will vastly improve upon the existing conditions and allow for better visibility of the remaining historic elements of the structure.

Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Criteria. The proposed 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 proposed enclosure windows comply with hurricane impact window requirements.

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

The proposed windows system will house the entry doors to the existing space and thus be operable. Additionally, tall ceilings inside the central space allows for movement of warmer air in the upper part of the area, further increasing comfort.

**(4) Whether resilient landscaping (salt tolerant, highly water-absorbent, native or Florida friendly plants) will be provided.**

This application does not provide for exterior renovations or increase in landscaping materials. The Applicant will continue to comply with all of the landscaping requirements for properties located along Ocean Drive.

- (5) Whether 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, including a study of land elevation and elevation of surrounding properties were considered.**

The Property consists of an existing contributing structure. The proposed renovations are cosmetic in nature and no elevation of the existing, contributing structures is proposed.

- (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.**

Not applicable.

- (7) Where feasible and appropriate, all critical mechanical and electrical systems shall be located above base flood elevation.**

All critical mechanical and electrical systems are located above Base Flood Elevation.

- (8) Existing buildings shall be, where reasonably feasible and appropriate, elevated to the base flood elevation.**

The existing, contributing structures are to remain in their existing location.

- (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.**

Proper precautions will be taken to protect the Property from potential floods.

- (10) Where feasible and appropriate, water retention systems shall be provided.**

Not applicable.

Conclusion. The Applicant's proposal is not only consistent with the character of the neighborhood and the intent of the Code, but it seeks to improve the neighborhood conditions. The enclosure, with the double-door vestibule, will assist in retaining sounds within the property and not allow their escape into the neighborhood in the late night hours. This addition will improve conditions for businesses and residents alike. We respectfully request your recommendation of approval of this request. Should you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Monika H. Entin', written in a cursive style.

Monika H. Entin

ME

cc: Ms. Debbie Tackett  
Mr. Jake Seiberling