

# MIAMI BEACH

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

### Staff Report & Recommendation

### Design Review Board

TO: DRB Chairperson and Members

DATE: March 1, 2022

FROM: Thomas R. Mooney, AICP  
Planning Director



SUBJECT: DRB21-0765  
**1933 Meridian Avenue**

An application has been filed requesting Design Review approval for the construction of a new single-story exhibition building for the Miami Beach Holocaust Memorial Museum, to replace an existing parking lot, along with associated landscape and roadway modifications to 19<sup>th</sup> street.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval.

#### **LEGAL DESCRIPTION:**

See attached 'Exhibit A'.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

On November 2, 2021, the voters of Miami Beach approved the following ballot question:

#### **Amending Lease of City Property: Holocaust Memorial Site**

*The Holocaust Memorial at Dade Boulevard and Meridian Avenue is on City land leased to the Greater Miami Jewish Federation until 2099. Shall City, at no cost to City, extend this Lease for 21 additional years and expand the leased premises to include adjacent 12,000 square foot City parking lot, per Resolution 2021-31809, with Federation at its sole expense constructing, operating and maintaining a 7,000 square foot Learning Center promoting tolerance and human rights?*

At the February 1, 2022 DRB meeting, the application was discussed and continued to a date certain of March 1, 2022, to address the concerns expressed by the Board.

#### **SITE DATA:**

Zoning:	GU
Total Lot Size (Holocaust):	72,826 SF
Holocaust Museum Parcel (original)	61,277 SF
Proposed Parcel (addition):	11,549 SF
Existing Use	Surface Parking Lot

#### **Surrounding Properties:**

East: Miami Beach Botanical Gardens  
North: Miami Beach Golf Course and multifamily building  
South: Pride Park  
West: Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce

**THE PROJECT:**

The applicant has submitted revised plans entitled "The Holocaust Memorial Center – DRB submittal", as prepared by **Arquitectonica**, dated, signed and sealed December 2, 2021.

**COMPLIANCE WITH ZONING CODE:**

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the application, as proposed, complies with requirements of the City Code. The above noted comments shall not be considered final zoning review or approval. These and all zoning matters shall require final review and verification by the Zoning Administrator prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

**CONSISTENCY WITH 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the proposed use is **consistent** with the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan.

**COMPLIANCE WITH DESIGN REVIEW CRITERIA:**

Design Review encompasses the examination of architectural drawings for consistency with the criteria stated below with regard to the aesthetics, appearances, safety, and function of the structure or proposed structures in relation to the site, adjacent structures and surrounding community. Staff recommends that the following criteria are found to be satisfied, not satisfied or not applicable, as hereto indicated:

1. The existing and proposed conditions of the lot, including but not necessarily limited to topography, vegetation, trees, drainage, and waterways.  
**Satisfied**
2. The location of all existing and proposed buildings, drives, parking spaces, walkways, means of ingress and egress, drainage facilities, utility services, landscaping structures, signs, and lighting and screening devices.  
**Satisfied**
3. The dimensions of all buildings, structures, setbacks, parking spaces, floor area ratio, height, lot coverage and any other information that may be reasonably necessary to determine compliance with the requirements of the underlying zoning district, and any applicable overlays, for a particular application or project.  
**Satisfied**
4. The color, design, selection of landscape materials and architectural elements of Exterior Building surfaces and primary public interior areas for Developments requiring a Building Permit in areas of the City identified in section 118-252.  
**Satisfied**
5. The proposed site plan, and the location, appearance and design of new and existing Buildings and Structures are in conformity with the standards of this Ordinance and other applicable ordinances, architectural and design guidelines as adopted and amended periodically by the Design Review Board and Historic Preservation Boards, and all pertinent master plans.  
**Satisfied**

6. The proposed Structure, and/or additions or modifications to an existing structure, indicates a sensitivity to and is compatible with the environment and adjacent Structures, and enhances the appearance of the surrounding properties.  
**Satisfied**
7. The design and layout of the proposed site plan, as well as all new and existing buildings shall be reviewed so as to provide an efficient arrangement of land uses. Particular attention shall be given to safety, crime prevention and fire protection, relationship to the surrounding neighborhood, impact on contiguous and adjacent Buildings and lands, pedestrian sight lines and view corridors.  
**Satisfied**
8. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic movement within and adjacent to the site shall be reviewed to ensure that clearly defined, segregated pedestrian access to the site and all buildings is provided for and that all parking spaces are usable and are safely and conveniently arranged; pedestrian furniture and bike racks shall be considered. Access to the Site from adjacent roads shall be designed so as to interfere as little as possible with traffic flow on these roads and to permit vehicles a rapid and safe ingress and egress to the Site.  
**Satisfied**
9. Lighting shall be reviewed to ensure safe movement of persons and vehicles and reflection on public property for security purposes and to minimize glare and reflection on adjacent properties. Lighting shall be reviewed to assure that it enhances the appearance of structures at night.  
**Satisfied**
10. Landscape and paving materials shall be reviewed to ensure an adequate relationship with and enhancement of the overall Site Plan design.  
**Satisfied**
11. Buffering materials shall be reviewed to ensure that headlights of vehicles, noise, and light from structures are adequately shielded from public view, adjacent properties and pedestrian areas.  
**Satisfied**
12. The proposed structure has an orientation and massing which is sensitive to and compatible with the building site and surrounding area and which creates or maintains important view corridor(s).  
**Satisfied**
13. The building has, where feasible, space in that part of the ground floor fronting a street or streets which is to be occupied for residential or commercial uses; likewise, the upper floors of the pedestal portion of the proposed building fronting a street, or streets shall have residential or commercial spaces, shall have the appearance of being a residential or commercial space or shall have an architectural treatment which shall buffer the appearance of the parking structure from the surrounding area and is integrated with the overall appearance of the project.

**Partially Satisfied; Although the building has a limited amount of glazing at street level due to programming requirements, the sculptural nature of the building along with the associated landscaping provide the necessary visual interest along the street.**

14. The building shall have an appropriate and fully integrated rooftop architectural treatment which substantially screens all mechanical equipment, stairs and elevator towers.

**Satisfied**

15. An addition on a building site shall be designed, sited and massed in a manner which is sensitive to and compatible with the existing improvement(s).

**Satisfied**

16. All portions of a project fronting a street or sidewalk shall incorporate an architecturally appropriate amount of transparency at the first level in order to achieve pedestrian compatibility and adequate visual interest.

**Partially Satisfied; Although the building has a limited amount of glazing at street level due to programming requirements, the sculptural nature of the building along with the associated landscaping provide the necessary visual interest along the street.**

17. The location, design, screening and buffering of all required service bays, delivery bays, trash and refuse receptacles, as well as trash rooms shall be arranged so as to have a minimal impact on adjacent properties.

**Not Applicable**

18. In addition to the foregoing criteria, subsection [118-]104(6)(t) of the city Code shall apply to the design review board's review of any proposal to place, construct, modify or maintain a wireless communications facility or other over the air radio transmission or radio reception facility in the public rights-of-way.

**Not Applicable**

19. The structure and site complies with the sea level rise and resiliency review criteria in Chapter 133, Article II, as applicable.

**Not Satisfied; see below**

#### **COMPLIANCE WITH SEA LEVEL RISE AND RESILIENCY REVIEW CRITERIA**

Section 133-50(a) of the Land Development establishes review criteria for sea level rise and resiliency that must be considered as part of the review process for board orders. The following is an analysis of the request based upon these criteria:

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

**Not Satisfied**

**A recycling plan shall be provided as part of the submittal for a demolition/building permit to the building department.**

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

**Not Applicable**

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

**Not Applicable**

- (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.

**Satisfied**

- (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.

**Satisfied**

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

**Satisfied**

- (7) In all new projects, all critical mechanical and electrical systems shall be located above base flood elevation. Due to flooding concerns, all redevelopment projects shall, whenever practicable, and economically reasonable, move all critical mechanical and electrical systems to a location above base flood elevation.

**Satisfied**

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

**Not Applicable**

- (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.

**Not Applicable**

- (10) In all new projects, water retention systems shall be provided.

**Not Satisfied; additional information will be required at the time of building permit in order to demonstrate compliance.**

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

**Satisfied; additional information will be required at the time of building permit in order to demonstrate compliance.**

- (12) The project design shall minimize the potential for a project causing a heat island effect on site.

**Satisfied; additional information will be required at the time of building permit in order to demonstrate compliance.**

## **STAFF ANALYSIS:**

### **DESIGN REVIEW**

The subject application is located on city owned land, which is rented and operated by the Jewish Federation. The proposed project includes a single story structure sited on the existing surface parking area along 19<sup>th</sup> Street, and will house additional exhibition spaces for the memorial, along with a lobby, restrooms, offices and a classroom. The street improvements shown on the plans, which include the relocation of much of the existing parking as street parking, with adjustments to the existing medians along 19th Street, are preliminary only, and will be reviewed further at a later date.

The current parking lot directly abuts 19<sup>th</sup> Street, and presently has no sidewalk connection between the existing Botanical Gardens to the east and Meridian Avenue to the west. The sidewalk will be extended as part of the proposed construction, along with the incorporation of canopy shade trees and on-street parallel parking both abutting the new exhibition building and within the existing adjacent median located between Meridian Avenue and Convention Center Drive.

Since the prior meeting, the applicant has made modifications to the plans in order to address the concerns expressed by the Board. The building will still be elevated to +9' NGVD, above the adjacent sidewalk which is located at approximately +3' NGVD, and include an expansive quarter circle stepped main entry, along with a curving ramp for access from the street level. However, the elevated walkway along 19<sup>th</sup> street has been removed, with the area now comprised of grade level landscaping against the building and the creation of a 'contemplative garden'. Further, the side of the building facing the existing memorial is now proposed to be a rectangular form, and a new exhibition/circulation 'spine' transitions from this rectangular more back of house programming to the circular exhibition/classroom spaces along 19<sup>th</sup> street.

The circular forms are still present along 19<sup>th</sup> Street, but softened by additional landscaping. Large windows have been incorporated into the multipurpose classroom space and bicycle parking has also been included in the site plan on the eastern side of the structure near a secondary entry vestibule.

The replacement of the existing surface parking lot with a sculptural building, along with the construction of the missing sidewalk connection on 19<sup>th</sup> Street will be an asset to the community, and staff recommend approval in accordance with the included draft order.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

In view of the foregoing analysis, staff recommends the application be **approved**, subject to the conditions enumerated in the attached Draft Order, which address the inconsistencies with the aforementioned Design Review criteria, Sea Level Rise criteria and Practical Difficulty and Hardship criteria.

**“Exhibit A”**

LEGAL DESCRIPTION ("ORIGINAL LEASE PREMISES AND ADDITIONAL LEASE PREMISES" AT THE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL):

ORIGINAL LEASE PREMISES:

COMMENCE at the intersection of the center lines of 19th/ Street and Meridian Avenue; thence run South East along the center line of 19th/ Street for a distance of 35.00 feet to a point; thence run North for a distance of 20.00 feet to a point, said point located in the west line of lot 1, Block 7A, AMENDED PLAT OF GOLF COURSE SUBDIVISION, according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 6, Page 26, public Records of Dade County, Florida; thence run south East for a distance of 3.00 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING, said point of beginning located in the east Right-of Way line of Meridian Avenue, according to the Deed Book 4349, Pages 439, 440, 442; and 443 Dade County, Florida; thence run south East along the North Right-of-Way line of 19th/ street, for a distance of 36.05 feet to a point; thence run North West for a distance of 63.26 feet to a point; thence run North East for a distance of 195.95 feet to a point; thence run North East for a distance of 13.21 feet to a point; thence run North East for a distance of 5.09 feet to a point; thence run North West for a distance of 49.86 feet to a point; thence run North East for a distance of 38.03 feet to a point; thence run North East for a distance of 74.30 feet to a point; thence run North West for a distance of 15.06 feet to a point; thence run North East for a distance of 0.66 feet to a point; thence run along a circular curve, concave to the southwest, having a central angle of and a radius of 30.00 feet for an arc distance of 52.62 feet to a point; thence run North West for a distance of 17.20 feet to a point; thence run along a circular curve, concave to the Northeast, having a central angle of and a radius of 29.13 feet for an arc distance of 65.19 feet to a point; thence run North West for a distance of 40.66 feet to a point; thence run south West for a distance of 64.54 feet to a point; thence run North West for a distance of 14.85 feet to a point; thence run south West for a distance of 167.26 feet to a point, said point located in the east Right-of Way line of Meridian Avenue, according to the Deed Book 4349, Pages 439, 440, 442, and 443 Dade County, Florida; thence run south along the East Right-of-Way of Meridian Avenue and parallel to the West Line of the above mentioned Block 7A for a distance of 243.25 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING.

Said LANDS located, lying and being in the CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, and containing an area of 61,277 square feet or 1.407 acres more or less.

TOGETHER WITH:

ADDITIONAL LEASE PREMISES:

A portion of Lot 1, Block 7A, together with a portion of the 30 foot wide BRIDLE PATH (PRIVATE PROPERTY) lying east of and adjacent thereto, all as shown on AMENDED PLAT OF GOLF COURSE SUBDIVISION, according to the plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 6, at Page 26, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, being more particularly described as follows:

Commence at the intersection of the centerlines of 19th Street and Meridian Avenue; thence South 89°59'40" East along the centerline of 19th Street a distance of 35.00 feet; thence North 00°00'00" East, departing said centerline a distance of 20.00 feet to the intersection of the southerly prolongation of the West line of said Lot 1 with the westerly prolongation of the South

line of said Lot 1; thence South 89°59'40" East along the westerly prolongation of said South line, a distance of 3.00 feet to a point on the East Right-of-Way line of Meridian Avenue, according to the Deed Book 4349, Pages 439, 440, 442, and 443 of the Public Records of Dade County (now Miami-Dade County), Florida; thence continue South 89°59'40" East along said westerly prolongation and along the South line of said Lot 1, a distance of 36.05 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING of the herein described parcel of land; the following two courses are along the Limits of the Original Lease Premises: (1) thence North 00°25'00" West, a distance of 63.26 feet; (2) thence North 89°35'00" East, across a portion of said Lot 1 and a portion of said BRIDLE PATH (PRIVATE PROPERTY), a distance of 180.95 feet; thence South 00°05'22" West, across said BRIDLE PATH a distance of 64.59 feet; thence North 89°59'40" West, along the South line of said Lot 1 and the westerly prolongation thereof, a distance of 180.38 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING.

Said LANDS located, lying and being in the CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, and containing an area of 11,549 square feet or 0.265 acres more or less.